

prepared by

**éva zabolai-csekme**

**lwf  
women's desk  
1972-1980**

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This documentation can be obtained through :

LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION - WOMEN'S DESK  
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## MAJOR CONSULTATIONS

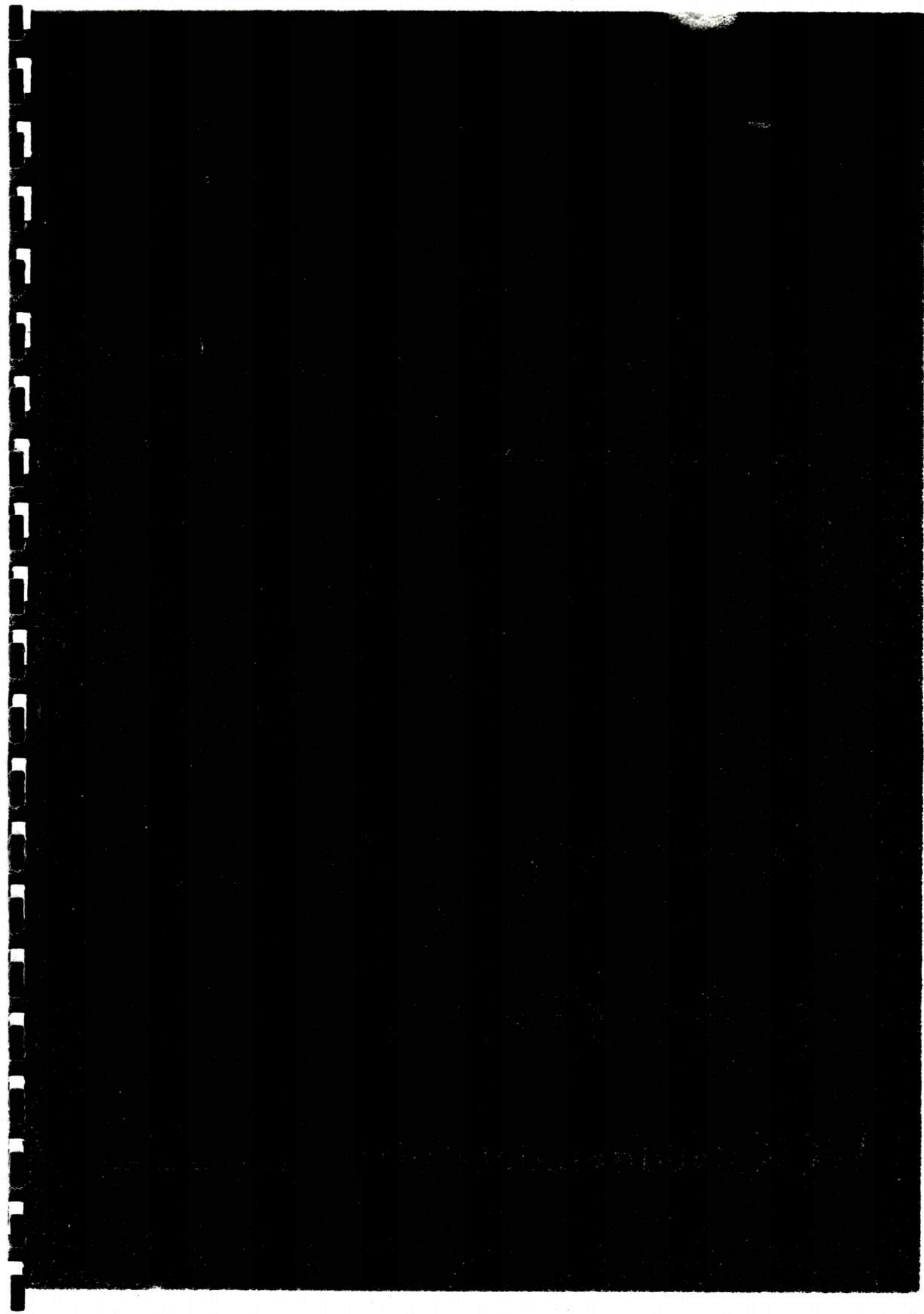
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## introduction

*"If before God there is no difference between men and women why is there a need for a Women's Desk within a religious organization?"*

I was faced with this question several times during my service with the LWF.

Yes, ideally there should be no need for a Women's Desk, for the church as "the sign of the Kingdom of God" should be exemplary with regard to human relationships. Yet, the reality is a different one. Instead of being the "salt of the earth" and a "light of the world", the church is often but a mirror of society. The situation of women within the church itself is a testimony to this fact. The struggle of women for acceptance is therefore not only a fight for human rights within a religious organization but a tremendous effort to call the church to penitence and to a new reformation, so that it may become a sign of the Kingdom of God here and now.

The aims and goals of the Women's Desk have been formulated as follows:

1. To assist women to accept themselves as human beings created in the image of God and therefore having abilities and responsibilities.
2. To assist men to accept women as capable, creative human beings created in the image of God.
3. To assist women and men to share responsibilities in working towards a just, equitable and peaceful society with shared resources and an increasing quality of life.

Throughout the years, the Women's Desk tried to help women find a new identity in a sense as it is outlined above. Seminars, conferences, publications, research projects, and exchange programmes all aimed at this goal. It is undeniable that a certain change took place and that the average level of consciousness among women is higher today than a few years ago. This change is due to several factors, among which the secular women's movement has to be mentioned first. However, the church related women's movement - the aims and goals of which are similar to or identical with those of the Women's Desk - has an important contribution to make. In challenging the sanctioning of patriarchal social structures and the domesticating effort of Christian proclamation, the movement not only serves as a liberating force for both women and men, but also as a force of renewal for the entire church.

It is evident that the changing consciousness of women is not enough. Men also need to raise their awareness, if a lasting change is to be achieved. Yet, it is at this point where there is still much to be desired from



the churches. Questions relating to the situation of women are regarded as "women's questions" and are placed on the periphery of the churches' agenda. This, of course, indicates that the depth of the issue has not yet been understood. For there is much more at stake than a human rights issue.

- The credibility of the church suffers as long as it is not ready to live and act according to the message of Christ,
- the theology of the church remains a loopsided one if women and their life experience remain excluded from its formation,
- the creation of just, equitable and peaceful societies is retarded as long as oppressive social structures are tolerated.

Wherever we look these days, we recognize that human beings are searching for a different world governed by different value systems, which allow people to live in harmony without exploiting each other. Through the message of Christ, the church has possessed these value systems for nearly two thousand years, yet centuries of Christian proclamation did not lead humankind to this new community on the local, national or global level. The lack of acceptance of women in the church is only one indication that the church itself was not and is not ready to act as a sign of this new order. Yet, the renewed relationship between women and men is basic to a new world community. For one thing, it is usually in the smallest units of our societies where human beings are socialized into

respecting or oppressing each other, for another, the acceptance of women would presuppose a "mankind" which is ready to recognize the human dignity of the other.

From the beginning, the Women's Desk has been committed to the creation of a new "Adam" and a new "Eve", who together would be in the position to create a world in which everybody could live in dignity. In order to be really effective in the future, the Women's Desk would need greater cooperation from the LWF and from national church structures and more readily available funds. It would also need more commitment from those decision-making bodies which have the possibility of hindering or furthering its work.

At this point I also have to give special thanks to all those women and men in the member churches who, in spite of difficulties, ridicule and humiliations, continued to work for a renewed partnership between women and men. The achievements of the Women's Desk throughout the years would not have been possible without the commitment, love and hard work of those who have a vision of a new human community and who are ready to do everything in their power so that this vision can become reality. A special thanks goes to the past and present members of the Advisory Committee to the LWF Women's Desk and to the LWF Regional Consultants for Women, whose excellent cooperation enabled a feasible programme-planning and the realization of the planned projects. In remembering the "pioneer-period" when the Women's Desk was created, my gratitude goes to



Dr. Ulrich Duchrow, the former Director of the LWF Department of Studies, to Dr. Gerta Scharffenorth, the major intellectual power behind the project "Women as Innovative Groups", to Dr. Anna-Marie Aagaard, former member of the Commission on Studies, and to Dr. Lois Leffler, the chairperson of the Advisory Committee, without whose constant support, encouragement and co-suffering many things would not have been possible. Last, but not least, I would like to thank all my colleagues, especially Eva Segal and Dorothea Millwood for their hard work and constant support. Special thanks go also to Renate Cerf for her help in preparing this document.

The first battles for the creation of the Women's Desk and the pioneer years of its establish-

ment are now over. There are many tasks left for the future. My hope is that the future staff of the Women's Desk will always keep in mind that "no organization is an island" and that close co-operation with other church-related and/or secular organizations is a necessity if one aims at a lasting change. It is equally important to keep in mind that only a reformed and united church is really able to carry out its mission and that therefore the struggle of women for acceptance in the church is only meaningful if they, at the same time, struggle for the unity and reformation of the church.

Geneva, December 1980

Éva Zabolai-Csekme



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## LWF and Women — a Short History

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The way in which women should cooperate in the work of the LWF has been the subject of discussion for a good number of years. At the LWF Assembly in Hanover 1952, there was one section called "Women of the Church". On the basis of the questions raised and discussed by this section, a volume entitled *Partnerschaft (Partnership)* was published, which was significant for the subsequent ecumenical discussion.

The work of this section showed that so-called women's questions in fact touch the whole life of church and society, and that women share responsibilities in every sphere of life. Therefore, the section recommended that in future Assemblies "women should find their place not in *separate section*...but in the general sections".<sup>1</sup> The section also suggested that "the work of the Federation's Commission on Women of the Church be continued..."<sup>2</sup>

The Assembly adopted with great applause the resolution of "Women of the Church" calling for the recognition of women as full partners in the work of the LWF. A separate women's commission was not created. But the three women representatives of women's work were appointed to the Commission on Stewardship and Congregational Life. However, this Commission remained the only one in which women participated. They were not employed as executive staff. Although a few individual women's groups within the LWF developed important activities, they had little success in bringing their contributions to the entire work of the Federation.

As a result of a definitely personal initiative, there was a slight increase in the number of women delegates and official visitors at the Minneapolis Assembly in 1957. However, this was not reflected in any increased participation by women in the church. A sub-committee of the Stewardship Commission organized, in connection with the Helsinki Assembly (1963), a Women's Pre-Assembly Conference in Schmalensee; however, financial

support for the conference came primarily from women's organizations in the USA. None of the executive staff members of the LWF participated. The discussion during the conference led the participants to conclude that the resolutions of Hanover could be implemented only if women were to have their own separate body within the Federation. Thus, the Findings Committee of the Pre-Assembly Conference recommended to the Assembly that a "standing world-wide representative committee"<sup>3</sup> be appointed. This committee would "be related to an appropriate Commission of the LWF"<sup>4</sup> and a woman staff member would be assigned "the task of assisting the standing committee".<sup>5</sup>

### Participation of Women in LWF Assemblies

Year	Place	Total of Delegates	Women Delegates	per cent
1947	Lund	178	5	2.8%
1952	Hanover	201	13	6.4%
1957	Minneapolis	255	18	7.0%
1963	Helsinki	267	20	7.5%
1970	Evian	228	22	9.6%
1977	Dar es Salaam	250	55	22.0%

Following the recommendations of the Helsinki Assembly, the LWF Executive Committee appointed a Continuation Committee on Women's Work to prepare another Women's Pre-Assembly Conference. For financial reasons, a woman was not appointed to the Geneva executive staff. In 1966 the Continuation Committee began working on plans for an international women's conference, but in 1967, the LWF Executive Committee decided to cancel it for financial reasons.



It was not until 1969 that such a meeting could be held, in Båstad, Sweden, in the form of another Pre-Assembly Women's Conference. It took up previous recommendations that, in view of the urgent, multifarious tasks of the church, women should participate in the entire spectrum of the LWF activities. Furthermore, the Båstad conference recommended "that studies and services of the LWF be extended to meet the concerns of women and their organizations of member churches (e.g. vocational training opportunities,...) and these concerns of women and their organizations in developing countries be given priority... and that regional leadership training experiences for leaders be provided upon request".<sup>6</sup> It also recommended "that a woman staff member be employed"<sup>7</sup> on a full-time basis to work on women's concerns. This recommendation was adopted by the Assembly at Evian (1970). The staff portfolio is entitled Continuing Education for Women<sup>8</sup> and the Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme is the woman executive in charge.<sup>9</sup> She is employed by the LWF Department of Studies.



- 1 The Proceedings of the Second Assembly of the LWF, Hanover, Germany, July 25 - August 3, 1952, p. 167
- 2 Ibid. Elisabeth Hahn published a study entitled *Partnership. A Contribution to the Problem of Equal Rights based on the Work of Section VI (Women in the Church)* of the LWF Assembly at Hanover, Germany (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1954). A special commission authorized by the *Evangelische Studiengemeinschaft* worked out a report concerning the problems of women entitled: *Die Frau im Beruf. Tatbestände, Erfahrungen, Vorschläge zu drängenden Fragen in der weiblichen Berufsarbeit und in der Lebensgestaltung der berufstätigen Frau* (Hamburg: Furche Verlag, 1954), edited by D. Heinrich Greeven.
- 3 Proceedings of the Fourth Assembly of the LWF, Helsinki, July 30 - Aug. 11, 1963, p. 496

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- 4 Ibid.
  - 5 Ibid.
  - 6 Agenda, LWF Executive Committee meeting, Copenhagen, Denmark, December 7-13, 1969, Exhibit J.1.
  - 7 Ibid.
  - 8 Lutheran World Federation, Fifth Assembly, Evian (1970), assembly document no. 40/R, p.10
  - 9 Gudrun Diestel (Stein/Nürnberg) summarized these events in the LWF (1952-72) at the first session of the preparatory meetings for the project.

Extract from :

*LUTHERAN WORLD* no. I, 1975

Gerta Scharffenorth: WOMEN AS  
INNOVATIVE GROUPS



## Mandate by the Fifth Assembly in Evian, 1970

The Women's Desk of the LWF was established by the Fifth Assembly of the LWF in Evian 1970 as a response to a strongly felt need in the member churches. Answers to the questionnaire sent to the member churches by the Women's Continuation Committee of the LWF (in existence until 1970) and the Pre-Assembly Women's Conference in Båstad/Sweden, 1969, articulated this need which prompted the Båstad Consultation to address the following recommendations to the LWF :

" A. Full partnership of women in the work of the LWF

It was RESOLVED that :

1. women be recognized as full partners in the work of the LWF by appointing them to the policy, planning and decision-making commissions and sub-committees of the LWF

In order to implement this recommendation

It was RESOLVED that:

2. the member churches and nominating committees of the LWF be apprised of the above recommendation.

B. Urgent needs for specific programmes and projects for women and their organizations in which persons are "helped to help themselves"

It was RESOLVED that :

1. training be provided for the development of skills in preparing educational materials to meet specific needs when such resources are not available.
2. an annotated listing of selected resources for planning educational experiences be made available upon request.
3. regional leadership training experiences for leaders be provided upon request.
4. assistance be given in planning exchange programmes among women's organizations of member churches.



5. member churches and their women's organizations be informed about ecumenical relationships in the areas of theological dialogue and practical cooperation, especially on the international level, and that ways be suggested to increase these efforts.
6. studies and services of the LWF be extended to meet the concerns of women and their organizations of member churches (i.e. vocational training opportunities, family planning, hostels, child care centres, etc.) and these concerns of women and their organizations in developing countries be given priority.
7. a communication (newsletter) be provided giving information about LWF and mutual exchange of information concerning programmes and projects of member churches, educational opportunities, scholarships, etc., and that the LWF mailing list include women leaders of member churches.

C. Staff personnel and committee

In order to implement the recommendations B1,2,3,4,5,6

It was RESOLVED that :

1. a woman staff member be employed to develop programme to meet the unmet concerns of women and their organizations of member churches, utilizing wherever possible existing services and programmes of LWF or other ecumenical and governmental or non-governmental international organizations.
2. this staff position be titled Continuing Education for Women, and appropriate budget provisions be made.
3. member churches be requested to supply to LWF women staff assistance for specialized short-term assignments.
4. a committee be appointed to advise staff and be related to an appropriate LWF Commission, e.g. a prospective Commission on Studies and Consultative Service. "(Amendments see below \*)

These recommendations, channelled through the Fifth Assembly, the newly appointed Commission on Studies and the new Executive Committee served as guidelines for the task of the Women's Desk.

The Women's Desk started its work in January 1972, when Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme was appointed to the staff of the LWF. The first task was to establish a communication network with leaders of women and their organizations in the member churches as well as with those bodies set up for this purpose. Subsequent visits to member churches and discussions with church leaders as well as leaders of women's organizations revealed that the assessment of the Båstad conference was correct and that the work of the Women's Desk had to go along the outlined tasks.



\* The International Consultation for Women of the Lutheran World Federation, Sri Lanka, December 1976 reaffirmed the Båstad mandate and suggested the following amendments :

1. That the LWF and the member churches be urged to implement A-1 and to work towards equal representation in all policy planning and decision-making commissions and sub-committees of the LWF.
2. That in reference to B-5 attention be given to reporting theological dialogues on national and local levels.
3. That in reference to B-7 all LWF communications be used to provide information about women's concerns.
4. That in reference to C-1 and C-2 the staff of the Women's Desk be increased to at least two full-time executives and necessary budget provided.
5. That in reference to C-4 the Advisory Committee be continued.
6. That, wherever practical, national correspondents be appointed as liaison persons with the Women's Desk.





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## **Mandate by the Sixth Assembly in Dar es Salaam, 1977**

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The Sixth Assembly of the LWF can be considered a milestone in the history of women within the Federation. Not only did the percentage of women delegates rise to 22% compared to 9.6% in Evian, 1970, not only was the Women's Desk finally formally established by the Assembly, but the organised presence of women was felt as a positive factor. Throughout the Assembly, women had a chance to meet as a group, discuss their problems, learn about Assembly procedures, and consider issues discussed by the Assembly.

As a result of the women's presence and of the work of the Women's Desk in previous years, the Assembly adopted a statement: "Women in Church and Society (text, see below), acted on recommendations related to women (text, see below) and urged the Executive Committee to give serious consideration to § 128 and § 129 of Seminar III Report as well as to the complete report of Issue Group III, 3 (text of latter, see below).

### **WOMEN IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY STATEMENT OF THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY**

The word of God states clearly that God created human beings both male and female in the divine image (Gen. 1:27). Although the equal partnership of men and women has been broken by human sin, establishing barriers and causing exploitation, humiliation and different kinds of suffering for both sexes, in the salvation given in Christ there is a promise of a new community between women and men. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

....

The new community in Christ is not only an eschatological gift but something which should get visible realization in the life of God's people wandering through history toward the promised kingdom. Christ's personal, loving acceptance of each human being calls each of us into the service of God and into the service of one another, also as men and women.

The realization of a new community in which men and women have equal rights and dignity should be an issue of high importance for the member churches of the LWF. It is true that the churches have many other things to do besides this. But with regard to many other tasks of the church, the realization of a new community between women and men will rather release energy and increase joy than exhaust the limited resources of our churches and congregations.

(Quoted from "In Christ - A New Community", LWF 1977, page 175.)

## WOMEN IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY -- RECOMMENDATIONS \*

A draft statement on "Women in Church and Society" was presented. Ms Kathleen Hurty (Lutheran Church in America) spoke in favour of the report. Professor Theodor Jørgensen (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark) moved that in the text "the new community" be replaced by "a new community", as in that case the concept also includes non-Christians. After brief discussion the motion was adopted. The Assembly resolved that the Lutheran World Federation adopt the statement and send it to the member churches. (For text see above.)

The Assembly then acted on further recommendations.

*The Assembly resolved to urge the member churches in their own contexts:*

1. *to study the concepts and ideals, language, theological views, emotional attitudes, power structures, etc. which prevent realising full, equal, joyful and creative partnership between men and women in the life of the church;*
2. *to create models which actualise the marks of a new community in division of labour and decision-making within the family and societal structures where we live and at all levels of church and congregational life;*

...



3. *that those churches who have not yet ordained women pastors study the issue seriously and, in any case, make earnest efforts to enable in all possible ways the participation of women in proclamation and mission and provide adequate educational opportunities for these tasks.*

*The Assembly resolved to urge the Lutheran World Federation to establish a full-time Women's Desk within the Department of Studies.*

*The Assembly resolved to urge the Executive Committee to give serious consideration:*

1. *to recommendations of the Seminar III Report, paragraphs 128 and 129, to the complete report of Issue Group III.3, and to the report of the Open Hearing on the Commission on Studies, with the understanding that close contact be kept with similar efforts under way in the World Council of Churches;*
2. *to asking the commissions to give priority to the requests coming from seminars and consultations in Asia, Africa and Latin America.*

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\* "In Christ a New Community", Report of the Sixth Assembly, LWF, 1977, p. 206.

#### Appendix I to Seminar III Report \*

### EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND MEN

#### Report of Issue Group III.3

The word of God states clearly:

That God created human beings both male and female into the divine image (Gen. 1:27);

and that there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, for all are one in Christ Jesus (Gal.3:28).

Throughout the gospel record of Christ's ministry his personal loving acceptance of each human being and his call of each one into the service of God are obvious.

In corporate Bible study and work, Issue Group III.3. shared concerns and agreed together to present to the Sixth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation the following resolutions. These resolutions were

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\* "In Christ a New Community", Report of the Sixth Assembly, LWF, 1977, pp. 141-144.

directed to the issue group in part by the Executive Committee of the LWF (see Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting, February 1977, Exhibit 17.2.3.1.) and in part by delegate initiative. The members of the issue group expressed their deep appreciation to the many women and men in world-wide consultations who formulated these various recommendations which the issue group collated and summarized here for the Assembly. It agreed quickly to affirm the recommendations of the five pre-Assembly consultations:

- (1) Consultation of the Lutheran Churches in the Caribbean Area, Surinam, January 1977;
- (2) All Africa Lutheran Consultation, Gaborone, Botswana, February 1977;
- (3) All Asia Lutheran Conference, Singapore, November/December 1976;
- (4) LWF International Consultation for Women, Colombo, Sri Lanka, December 1976;
- (5) LWF Consultation on Women and Worship, Madison, Wisconsin, USA, April 1977.

At these consultations it was strongly felt that special measures must be taken to ensure that operations related to the partnership between women and men be taken seriously and dealt with at the Assembly in Dar-es-Salaam.

#### A. Women and Human Rights

The consultations meeting in Sri Lanka, Surinam and Madison recommend that the Sixth Assembly:

1. alert church leaders about the violation of human rights among women;
2. commit itself in the sharing in the struggle of women by ensuring that the issue of human rights does not overlook questions of women's rights;
3. encourage churches to foster attitudinal changes to promote recognition of the dignity of women;
4. instruct the LWF to staff the LWF Human Rights Desk with one woman in an executive position.

#### B. Women in Education

The consultations meeting in Botswana, Singapore and Sri Lanka recommend to the LWF:

1. that literacy programs for women be intensified;
2. that leadership training experiences for women be increased;
3. that the churches be encouraged to develop educational programs which set forth biblical grounds for women's involvement in the entire mission of the church and which foster women's self-aware-



ness and self-confidence as instruments of God in God's mission.

#### C. Women in Church Policy, Decision-making and Staffing

The consultations meeting in Botswana, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Madison recommend that the LWF:

1. encourage the member churches to make women's full participation in and contribution to the mission of the church their policy;
2. implement just and creative hiring and employment practices;
3. establish a Women's Desk at the LWF Headquarters in Geneva and make sure that it is adequately funded;
4. employ an African women's secretary and an Asian women's secretary located in the regions mentioned;
5. encourage each church to employ full-time, trained and qualified women's secretaries;
6. encourage the inclusion of women at all levels of decision-making, moving toward proportionate representation.

#### D. Women in Worship, Liturgy and Theology

The consultations meeting in Madison and Sri Lanka recommend that the LWF:

1. involve women in biblical theological studies and urge the Executive Committee to involve women in the working groups responsible for carrying out bilateral dialogues and in the staff and board of the Strasbourg Institute;
2. initiate a study of liturgies and hymns used in member churches to identify words and images describing God and to share the results with member churches;
3. encourage and amplify the use of inclusive language and provide guidelines for the use of such language;
4. staff the LWF Worship Desk with at least one women executive;
5. establish an international network of women who can be a resource for the development and sustenance of spiritual community.

#### E. Women in Development

The consultation meeting in Sri Lanka recommends that the LWF:

1. insist that all development projects of World Service take into account their impact on women and that they be evaluated in accordance with the following:
  - (a) Do women participate in the initiation and the direction of the project?
  - (b) What are the benefits of this project for women?
  - (c) Does this project increase women's options? What are the political, economic and cultural implications of this project with regard to women?



(d) Does it reinforce church and social structures that exclude women?

2. recommend that the Community Development Service make a lump sum available to be used for local projects requiring limited funds, e.g. pottery, small scale farming implements, marketing skills, etc.;
3. recommend that regional consultations on "Women and Rural Development" be initiated;
4. recommend that work for provision of pure water and sanitation be intensified, that special health care, hygiene, child care and nutrition programs for women be established;
5. recommend that this recommendation be shared with cooperation donor agencies as well as churches initiating the projects.

#### F. Women in Communications

The consultations meeting in Botswana and Sri Lanka recommend to the LWF that it:

1. intensify its efforts to communicate positive images of women which recognize their capabilities, insights and contribution;
2. communicate women's concerns as an integral part of the information that it distributes to the LWF and its member churches;
3. invite women to participate in training experiences on communication;
4. encourage the hiring of women in communication staff positions;
5. bring these concerns also to the attention of the World Association of Christian Communication;
6. encourage member churches to review their modes of information and to establish more platforms for discussion in order to improve the dissemination of findings and results of meetings, workshops and conferences.

#### G. Women in Ecumenical Relations

The consultation meeting in Sri Lanka recommends to the LWF and its member churches that:

1. confessional identity not be emphasized at the expense of Christian unity and service;
2. the initiatives of lay persons, especially women, regarding ecumenical relations be recognized.

As a direct result of the women's presence in Dar-es-Salaam, the number of women on the Executive Committee and on the Commissions increased considerably.

#### LWF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Consisting of thirty members, the Executive Committee includes six women:

1. Dr. Dorothy Marple / USA
2. Ms. Fibi Nadah / Nigeria
3. Rev. Annette Nuber / F.R.G.
4. Ms. Bodil Sølling / Denmark
5. Dr. B.V. Subbamma / India
6. Rev. Audur Vilhjalmsdottir / Iceland

#### COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION

This committee consists of ten members, of which two are women:

1. Ms. Ruth Abraham / Ethiopia
2. Ms. Gertrud Brundin / Sweden

#### COMMISSION ON CHURCH COOPERATION

The total membership is twelve, out of which there is one woman:

1. Ms. Danielle Ostertag / France

#### COMMISSION ON STUDIES

Membership is twelve. 30% are women:

1. Ms. Marietta Razivelo / Madagascar
2. Ms. Casselia Stewart / Liberia
3. Ms. Sophia Tung / Taiwan
4. Ms. Ana C. Rodriguez de Zayas / Puerto Rico

#### COMMISSION ON WORLD SERVICE

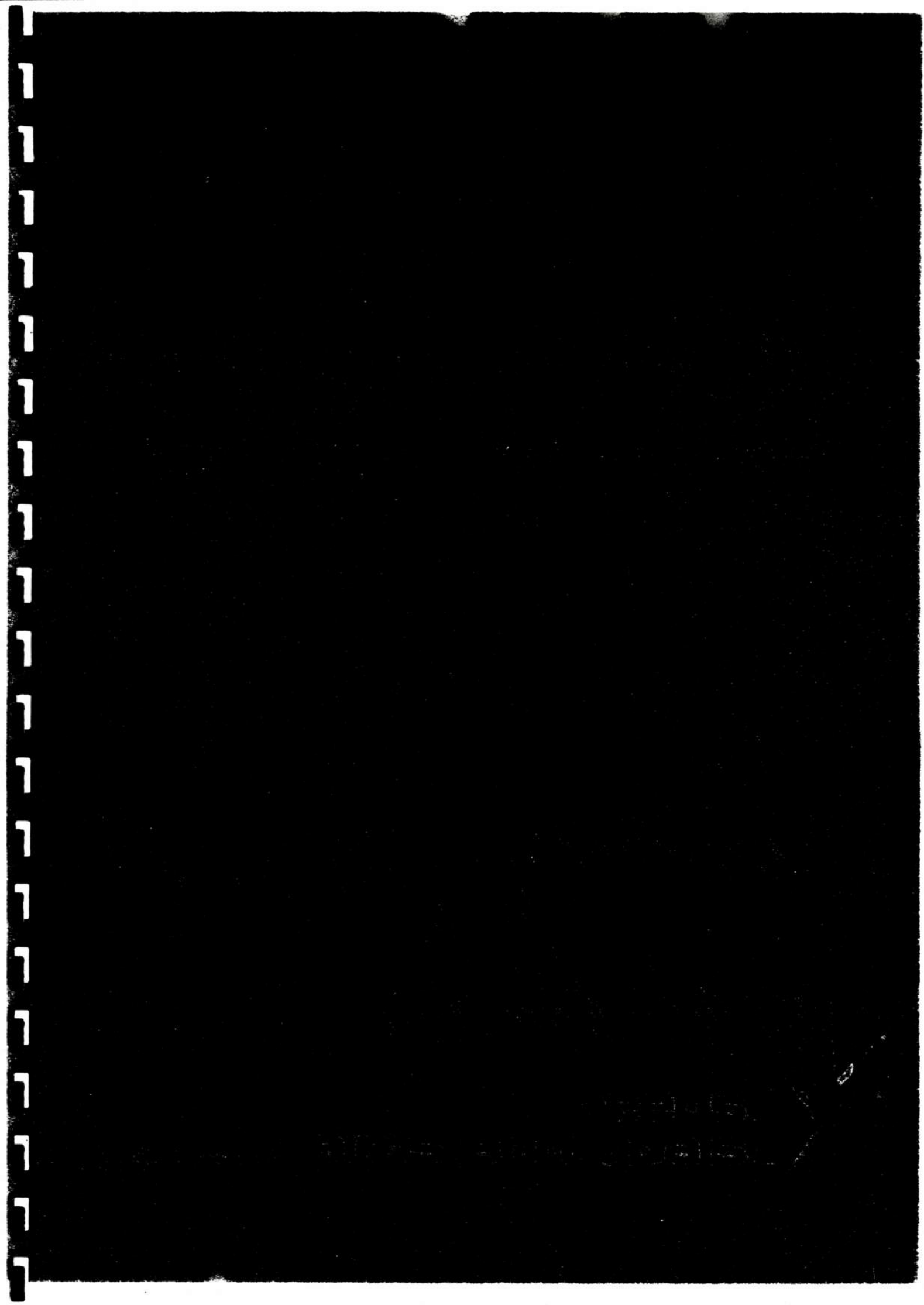
Total membership is twelve. 25% are women:

1. Rev. Gudrun Diestel / F.R.G.
2. Ms. Kaanaeli Makundi / Tanzania
3. Ms. Kazuko Matsuzawa / Japan

#### CDS GOVERNING COMMITTEE

Total membership is seven, out of which there are two women:

1. Ms. Mary Henry / USA
2. Ms. Christina Rogestam / Sweden





## needs of women in the member churches

*Recognizing the fact that the tasks of the LWF Women's Desk have to be based on the needs of women in the member churches, the LWF International Consultation for Women in Sri Lanka and the following meeting of the LWF Advisory Committee on Women in the Church identified the most burning needs of women in the various areas.*

### A. EDUCATION AND AWARENESS BUILDING

1. Biblical and theological training
  - a) to involve women in biblical studies for a fuller understanding of the gospel message
  - b) to train women to have a theological understanding of the role of women and their Christian responsibility to the church and all of society
  - c) to encourage formal theological education for women
2. Awareness building on local level
  - a) to help women to become aware of their rights, potentials and responsibilities
  - b) to help women to become social change agents in church and society
  - c) to help women to focus on issues related to their lives.
3. Leadership development
  - a) to train women in problem analysis and problem solving
  - b) to train for participation in decision making processes
  - c) to help women to understand and deal with the impact of development of women.

4. Basic education
  - a) to provide for and promote literacy programmes throughout the world
  - b) to provide information and education on the use and control of drugs
  - c) to train in nutrition
  - d) to train in health care
  - e) to train for responsible parenthood
5. Educational material
  - a) to produce educational materials which can be adopted by women of different cultural backgrounds

## B. ROLE, STATUS AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

### IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

1. Need for continuing review of church structures making them respond to present changes through :
  - a) re-examining what ministry means today and who is involved in it
  - b) designing participatory church structures
  - c) re-examining the validity of structures within different cultural frameworks.
2. Need to help women to create participation in worship on all levels.
3. To lift up women's contribution to the history of the church and society.
4. To work for the participation of women on all levels of ecumenical relationship.
5. To create an awareness of the value of women's unpaid work.
6. To support and affirm women who are working for constructive social change.
7. To encourage and support women who are engaged in new work styles and new life styles.
8. To sensitize women and men to sexist language and false images of women and to take steps to use inclusive language.
9. To need to help women to participate in the decision making processes.

### C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. To insist that the LWF and member churches use established criteria in evaluating development projects and their effects on women.
2. To help recognize the economic effects of training experiences (eg. nutrition, responsible parenthood, handicraft training, etc.) and to help women and men deal with these effects.
3. To provide assistance through training and seed money in helping women develop livelihood or to obtain jobs without sex discrimination.
4. To encourage equal job opportunities and wages for women and men.
5. To encourage job related benefit programs such as maternity leaves, day care centres, time off for breast feeding, etc.
6. To see that both small and large projects are given equal consideration in LWF funding.
7. To insist continually that the LWF use creative approaches in employing women staff members and in encouraging member churches to do likewise.
8. To support the unsupported - the poorest of the poor, the widowed, divorced, single women.
9. To raise awareness in working for a more equal distribution of the world's resources, especially in relation to basic requirements for daily living.

### D. COMMUNICATION

1. For international exchange among women and women's organizations
2. For international exchange with ecumenical, governmental and non-governmental organizations and agencies
3. To keep church leaders informed of women's issues and concerns within the context of international affairs
4. To maintain open channels of communications directly with women and women's organizations and through LWF national committees
5. To encourage mass media and church publications to give information about and interpret the concerns of women



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## Aims and Goals of the Women's Desk\*

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### OVERALL GOALS

- A. To assist women to accept themselves as human beings created in the image of God and therefore having abilities and responsibilities.
- B. To assist men to accept women as capable, creative human beings created in the image of God.
- C. To assist women and men to share responsibilities in working towards a just, equitable and peaceful society with shared resources and an increasing quality of life.

### SUB-GOALS

#### I. Education

- 1. To involve women in theological studies for a deeper, contextual understanding of the Biblical message and its implications.
- 2. To assist women to be aware of and informed about social, economic and political realities and to equip them to participate actively in the development of our societies, locally, nationally and internationally.
- 3. To help initiate educational programmes which will assist women in developing their potential, promote change of attitudes and help in acquiring knowledge and skills which improve the quality of life.

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\* as formulated by The Advisory Committee for the LWF Women's Desk at its meeting in Monrovia/Liberia, November 1978.

4. To provide and promote leadership development for women to enable them to assume full partnership in the life and work of the church and society at all levels.
5. To develop and distribute resource materials to help equip persons to conduct leadership development events and promote follow-up action and evaluation.

## II. Development

1. To encourage the initiation of market research and small-scale projects to increase the earning capacity and self-reliance of women.
2. To help women be aware of the inequitable distribution of the world's resources especially in relation to basic needs and to understand and promote the establishment of a New International Economic Order.

## III. Human Rights

1. To assist women to be aware of and informed about human rights issues with a specific focus on ways women's rights have been violated not only by men and social, political and economic structures, but by women themselves.
2. To help women be equipped for actively joining others in the struggle for the rights of all human beings.

## IV. Communication

To encourage women to participate in communication training events and urge LWF and member churches to use their mass media to present a positive image of women and highlight their contribution and concerns.

## V. Women and worship, liturgy, theology and ordination

1. Encourage and equip women to contribute towards the renewal of liturgy and worship including :
  - a) The critical re-examination of its language and structures
  - b) The rethinking of the words and images describing God, and
  - c) The striving towards a partnership between laity and clergy.
2. Encourage women to undertake theological studies and promote the ordination and acceptance of women as full partners in the ministry of the church.

VI. Women in ecumenical relations

Encourage women and women's organizations to carry out their mission in cooperation with other denominations, assist the churches in recognizing the initiatives of laity, especially women, regarding ecumenical relations and urge them to involve women as participants and church representatives in ecumenical events.

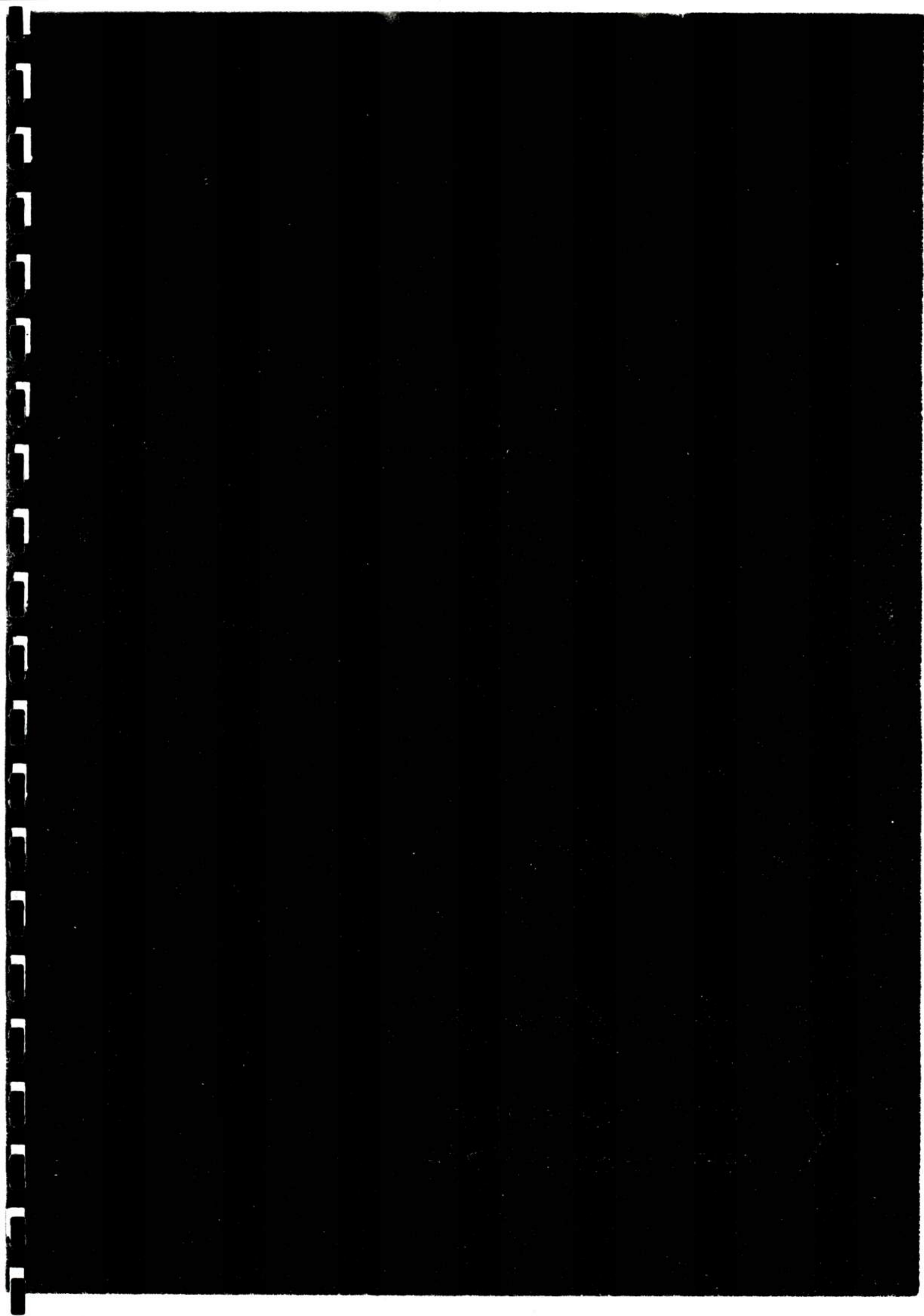
VII. Women in church policy, decision-making, and staffing

1. To equip women to participate in decision-making at all levels of the churches and to work towards establishing structures and models for decision-making and staffing which are inclusive of both women and men.

VIII. Women's Desk and internal LWF structures

To work in cooperation with other LWF Departments and/or units in building and implementing in their areas of work strategies of study and action which include women's concerns and participation so that these are not limited to the LWF Women's Desk alone.





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## Advisory Committee for the LWF Women's Desk

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Within the first years of work it became evident that an Advisory Committee with geographically balanced representation is necessary in order to further ensure that staff receives knowledgeable guidance, creative ideas and help in the execution of its task.

This need was expressed as early as 1969 by the Båstad Consultation and was approved by the Fifth Assembly of the LWF for serious consideration by the Commission on Studies.

In 1974, the Commission on Studies approved the formation of the suggested Advisory Committee, which met for the first time in January 1975 in Geneva, Switzerland. The Committee meets yearly in order to review the tasks accomplished by the Women's Desk and in order to plan future activities. The mandate of the Committee was formulated at its first meeting in 1975 and was amended in the meeting of December 1976, as well as in the meeting of November 1978.

### MEETINGS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1975	January	: Geneva, Switzerland
1976	January	: New York, USA
1976	December	: Colombo, Sri Lanka
1978	November	: Monrovia, Liberia
1980	January	: Guadalajara, Mexico
1980	December	: Geneva, Switzerland

# MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## 1975 - 1977

AFRICA	:	Ms. Sarah Kamala, Tanzania (1975)
		Ms. Elizabeth Karorsa, Ethiopia (1976/77)
ASIA	:	Ms. Rita Wang, Hong Kong
EUROPE	:	OKR Gudrun Diestel, FRG
LATIN AMERICA	:	Ms. Anna Lange, Brazil
NORTH AMERICA	:	Dr. Dorothy Marple, USA

## 1978 - 1980

AFRICA	:	Ms. Ruth Besha, Tanzania
ASIA	:	Ms. Alida Nababan, Indonesia
EUROPE (EAST)	:	Rev. Ingeborg Köhler, GDR
EUROPE (WEST)	:	Dr. Pirkko Lehtiö, Finland
LATIN AMERICA	:	Ms. Grace Yisu-Das, Guyana
NORTH AMERICA	:	Dr. Lois Leffler, USA (Chairperson)

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Provide a forum for the expression of the needs and concerns of women of member churches of the LWF.
2. Provide advice to the Women's Desk and the Commission on Studies for work with women and for work among women and men.
3. Provide and utilise channels for the interpretation of women's work to and from the LWF constituency.
4. Review, design when appropriate and recommend proposals for work among women by the LWF Women's Desk.
5. Review of the Agenda to be presented to the Commission on Studies at its annual meeting.
6. Review when necessary materials prepared by the LWF Women's Desk according to establish criteria and needs.
7. Advocate the development of relationships with ecumenical, denominational and world organizations with programs related to women.
8. Study and be informed about theological, social, political, cultural and economic factors which have impact upon women's lives and consider how women can be a positive force for mission and development.

The Advisory Committee is appointed by the Commission on Studies for a period of three years with the possibility of extension of service by the Commission.



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## Regional Consultants

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In 1975 the Hong Kong Lutheran Women's Fellowship Association meeting in Hong Kong and the Leadership Development Seminar for Women meeting in Sukabumi, Indonesia, recommended that the LWF CS/DS appoint a regional consultant for Asia to work with and among women. These recommendations grew out of a recognition by LWF/DS staff and the women in those regions of Asia that the needs of women and their member churches at the local level were so many and varied that consultative services should be provided at the regional level in addition to that given by Geneva staff.

This recommendation was reiterated in 1976 by the 3rd All Asia Lutheran Consultation in Singapore and by the LWF International Consultation for Women in Sri Lanka.

All Asia Lutheran Consultation in Singapore:

"DCC is requested to have a women's desk headed by an Asian woman".

LWF International Consultation for Women in Sri Lanka:

"reiterates the unanimous request from the Leadership Development Seminar held in Indonesia, October 24th to November 2nd, 1975, independently from the Hong Kong Lutheran Women's Fellowship Association, that a person be employed to carry out work with and among women in Asia (job description as seconded in the Minutes from the second meeting of the LWF Advisory Committee on Women in the Church, January 1976.)"

The original intention of the Sri Lanka Consultation was to ask the DS to appoint the regional consultants, but, knowing that the Women's Desk had had difficulties in obtaining adequate financial support for its requests, directed the action to DCC.

In 1977, the women delegates at the All Africa Lutheran Consultation in Botswana requested: "that an office in Africa be established for a trained and experienced African woman to carry out work with and among women in Africa. We also urge that the LWF should take steps to employ an executive female staff member from AALA at the LWF Women's Desk and also in other executive positions in the Geneva offices."

1979

At its meeting in 1978, the Commission on Studies accepted the proposal to appoint six sub-regional consultants, three for Africa and three for Asia, each of them being responsible for regional planning and program development in the particular geographic area assigned to her.

By the end of 1978 four of the sub-regional consultants had been appointed. These four consultants met in Geneva 12-19 January 1979 for a workshop preparing them for their new tasks.

The appointed regional consultants are:

Nancy Y.C. Chow  
68, Begonia Road  
Yau Yat Chuen  
Kowloon  
HONG KONG

for: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea,  
Japan and Malaysia (Chinese  
speaking church)

Eva Jorkey  
Lutheran Church in Liberia  
P.O. Box 1046  
Monrovia  
LIBERIA

for: West Africa: Liberia, Nigeria  
Ghana, Cameroon, Central  
African Empire

Kaanaeli Makundi  
Evangelical Lutheran Church  
in Tanzania  
P.O. Box 837  
Dar es Salaam  
TANZANIA

for: East Africa: Tanzania, Kenya  
Ethiopia, Madagascar

Bondu Subhashini  
(in her capacity as  
Women's Work secretary  
UELCI)  
Gurukul Campus  
Kilpauk  
Madras 600 010  
SOUTH INDIA

for: India and Malaysia (Tamil  
speaking church)

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#### TERMS OF REFERENCE: JOB DESCRIPTION FOR LWF/DS REGIONAL CONSULTANTS

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1. The task of the regional consultants is to help promote and carry out the overall goals and sub-priorities of the LWF Women's Desk as approved by the Commission on Studies from time to time. These present goals are based on the recommendations of the Sixth LWF Assembly, the recommendations resulting from the Advanced Leadership Development Seminar for Women in Bossey, Switzerland, 1978, and the Seminar for Women in Monrovia, Liberia, 1978, and also the recommendations of the LWF Advisory Committee for Women, November 1978.
2. The major areas of responsibility for the regional consultants are:
  - a) Visiting member churches, women's organizations and women leaders in their respective areas to identify the needs of women and note requests for possible programmes;
  - b) report identified needs and requests (with the endorsement of the church/national committee) to the Women's Desk and help formulate programmes to meet these needs;
  - c) contact and cooperate with other organizations or agencies which are, or could be, alerted to respond to identified needs of women;
  - d) help the Women's Desk in the planning, execution and follow-up of workshops and seminars in their respective areas;
  - e) cooperate with the Women's Desk in the planning, execution and follow-up of regional consultations;
  - f) assist in identifying resource persons for seminars, workshops and consultations;
  - g) assist in identifying capable young women to be involved in programme participation and leadership;
  - h) assist in the implementation of participatory research programmes;



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- 1) contribute to the ongoing process of conscientization of both women and men for building a renewed partnership in church and society.
  3. The regional consultant for Women in the Church shall serve in the pursuance of her assignment as representative of the LWF/DS. She shall carry out her task in close consultation and cooperation with the Women's Desk and shall be responsible in her work to that Desk.

In cases where the consultant is requested by other LWF units to undertake ongoing consultative services to another programme or region, such requests are to be channelled through the LWF Women's Desk.
  4. The consultant shall:
    - a) keep the LWF Women's Desk informed about her correspondence on important issues and forward information such as relevant articles and news suitable for the newsletter "WOMEN";
    - b) prepare annual reports for submission to the LWF Women's Desk by January 15th:
      - Report 1: progress reports and requests from the churches,
      - Report 2: evaluation of the work with and among women in the member churches of her region,
      - Report 3: the consultant's own work during the year and outline of future plans, including preparation and submission of annual budget requests;
    - c) maintain accounts for all money given to her and send annual audited reports of the same to the LWF Women's Desk.
  5. The consultant shall give priority to LWF member churches where limitation of her time and finances so require, but shall bear in mind the ecumenical perspective in which this issue needs to be dealt with. Thus, she shall encourage ecumenical cooperation where desirable and feasible and shall give such assistance to other churches as possible within the limitations of her time and finances and the wishes of the member churches being served.



## Leadership Development

*"Educate a man, you educate an individual -  
educate a woman, you educate a nation".*

Leadership training is one of the most urgent needs of women in the Lutheran churches. Responding to this need, the Women's Desk of the LWF Department of Studies has concentrated its efforts on providing different leadership development opportunities especially for women in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The content of these seminars in each case was determined by the local churches. Preparatory meetings always preceded such seminars, at which in some instances LWF staff was present. The topics for the seminar were in all cases worked out in such preparatory meetings by the women involved. At each seminar opportunity was given to the participants to discuss the question of their needs as women in church and society, on this basis make recommendations to their own organization, to their own churches and to the LWF.



## MADAGASCAR

The aim of this seminar held in Fianarantsoa, October 1973, was to add to the continuing education of women within the Lutheran church in Madagascar, especially with regard to their responsibilities within that church. The seminar concentrated on the following subjects :

1. Methods of evangelization
2. Prayer
3. Christian love and social justice
4. The Christian family and world peace

This programme was developed by those responsible in the National Association of Lutheran Women in Madagascar under the leadership of Ms. Abeline Razanamamy. The seminar, attended by 120 women, was conducted in Malagasy, with some exceptions of lectures given in English and French, which were translated. The seminar raised major questions regarding the role of women in the church, especially in Christian education, and the role of women in peace building and national development. The seminar was conducted by Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme in cooperation with Ms. Rose Gurupatham, India, (at that time staff of the WCC).

## ETHIOPIA

This seminar, held in Addis Ababa, October 19th - November 2nd, 1973 was initiated upon the realization that work with and among women in Ethiopia needed rethinking and reactivating and that coordination on the national level was necessary. For this reason the participants spent several days acquiring a clearer picture of the needs of women in their country by means of discussions, lectures and visits to relevant institutions. On the basis of the felt needs guidelines for the future work with and among Lutheran women in Ethiopia were worked out. Entitled: "Proposals for organizing women's work", this document is included in the publication about the seminar: "Leadership Development for Women, Addis Ababa 1973". In addition, the seminar also aimed at enabling the 26 participants to become more qualified leaders in their communities. Each day a different method for teaching the Bible was not only described but also practised. On the basis of practical experience the participants learned how to prepare their own radio programme to be broadcasted by RVOG. Through establishing contacts with organizations like :

1. The Economic Commission for Africa
2. The Ethiopian Women's Welfare Association
3. The Family Guidance Association
4. The International Labour Office
5. The Young Women's Christian Association

the participants were encouraged to cooperate with already existing organizations dealing with questions related to the well-being of women.

Throughout the seminar there were plenty of opportunities to discuss the status of women in church and society including such topics as how to raise the self-esteem of women, how to encourage them to actively participate in community development and how to encourage them to creative thinking as far as their participation in the life of the church is concerned.

The seminar was led by Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme in cooperation with Ms. Rose Gurupatham, India, and Ms. Lois Leffler, USA.

The lectures, Bible study methods and recommendations of the seminar were published in the book "Leadership Development for Women, Addis Ababa 1973". This book has been sent to all member churches of the LWF and is being used by several women's organizations in their leadership development efforts.

## INDIA

65 women from all Lutheran churches in India gathered in Madras, India in November 1974 for a workshop organized by the FELCI and financed by the LWF Department of Studies.

This workshop dealt with the situation of women in India, taking the different aspects of women's lives into consideration. Education of women, family education and family planning, women's political participation and the role of women in the church were dealt with extensively. Women's organizations of the nine Lutheran churches reported on their activities and discussed possibilities for strengthening and improving their programmes. Recommendations addressed to the LWF with regard to

1. holding a longer leadership development seminar for women in India
2. holding an international consultation for women of the LWF in 1975
3. organizing international exchange programmes for women

were formulated and given to the Secretary of FELCI to be forwarded to the LWF in Geneva.

Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme attended the workshop as a speaker.

## NIGERIA

In May 1975, 60 women gathered in the buildings of the Theological Seminary of the Lutheran Church in Uyo, Nigeria, for a three-day workshop under the leadership of Ms. Eva von Hertzberg, staff of the LWF Department of Studies. This workshop included both educated and illiterate women.

The workshop was held two months after the foundation of the Lutheran Women's Association and its goal was to further define the aims of the new association. In order to achieve this goal, the participants of the workshop discussed the situation of women in Nigeria and identified some of their problems. Among them were:

1. Illiteracy
2. The customary subordinate role of married women which among other problems does not leave them time to attend educational activities.
3. Low income due to lack of skills and vocational training.



Besides the problems listed, the leaders of the Lutheran Women's Association emphasized the need for international experience and exchange, leadership development and scholarships for women. They also made plans for the support of evangelists and pastors going to new areas of mission work.

### YUGOSLAVIA

Staff of the Women's Desk had been invited to visit the Slovak Evangelical Christian Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia in April 1976 in order to meet the women of this church. Due to excellent planning for this visit by the senior of the church, Ms. Eva von Hertzberg was able to meet about 300 women in the six main congregations mostly located in rural areas.

The aims of these six meetings were :

- to make the women aware of the situation and problems of women in other continents. This was underlined and accompanied by showing slides about life and work of women in the Lutheran Church in Tanzania.
- to broaden the views of women in terms of ecumenical relations and to enhance the understanding of Christian life styles in other countries of people of other races and cultures.
- to help the women of this church to reflect on their own situation and to encourage them to take on more responsibilities and new areas of work in their church.

### INDONESIA / MALAYSIA

Fourty participants from the five Lutheran churches in Indonesia and the two Lutheran churches in Malaysia gathered in the Wisma Oekumene Centre in Sukabumi (Java) from October 24th to November 2nd, 1975 for an LWF-sponsored Leadership Development Seminar for Women. The seminar was led by Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme and Ms. Eva von Hertzberg.

Under the motto - FREE TO DEVELOP, LEAD AND SHARE - the seminar dealt with :

1. Women's role in economic development
2. Family planning and population education
3. Methods of evangelization
4. Bible studies
5. Women in the church - theological aspects
6. Organizational techniques for work with and among women in the church
7. Planning for action on the local, regional and international level

This was the first training seminar in which women from all Lutheran churches in Indonesia participated. The opportunity was welcomed with much enthusiasm by all participants. The excellent atmosphere and the strong feeling of sisterhood throughout the seminar were visible expressions of this feeling. This seminar marked a new stage of cooperation between the women's organizations of the different churches.



This new stage of cooperation has been greeted with considerable enthusiasm by leaders of the different Lutheran churches in Indonesia who, together with a large number of women gathered in Jakarta for the closing rally on November 2nd, 1975. Each of the church leaders brought greetings and words of encouragement to the women. In the final celebration Dr. Soritua Nababan, one of the Vice-presidents of the LWF expressed his appreciation for the work of the seminar. Also sharing in this event was Prof. Dr. Andreas Aarflot, member of the Executive Committee of the LWF.

The follow-up of this seminar, organized entirely by the women in Indonesia, is encouraging. 300 women met for a week in Medan in order to communicate to others and further discuss the topics dealt with in Sukabumi. In addition a short seminar attended by 40 women was held in Medan, followed by one in Balige, North Sumatra.

### PHILIPPINES

Twenty four Lutheran women from different parts of the Philippines gathered at the campus of the Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, for a three-day workshop, November 16th - 19th, 1975 to discuss :

- The role of women in the Lutheran Church in the Philippines - past, present and potential.

The aim of the workshop was to design an ongoing training programme for women in the church. The programme, organized and financed by the Lutheran Church in the Philippines, was led by Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme and Ms. Eva von Hertzberg.

During the seminar the participants identified the needs of both women and their society and worked out plans for future involvement.

Among the positive results of the seminar was the outlining of a proposal with regard to the establishment of the LUTHERAN WOMEN'S LEAGUE IN THE PHILIPPINES, an organization to encourage further and coordinate Lutheran women's activities:

In preparation of their future involvement the participants requested the Lutheran Church in the Philippines to organize a leadership development seminar for women in 1976 dealing with the following:

- Muslim culture
- Nutrition
- Sanitation and health which includes preventive medicine and drug education
- Family education which includes family planning

The participants of the workshop expressed their hope that this initial meeting would greatly contribute to a more active involvement of women in the life and work of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines.

## HONG KONG / REGIONAL WORKSHOP 1975

Leading women from the different Lutheran churches in Hong Kong, the Taiwan Lutheran Church, the Kinki Evangelical Lutheran Church (Japan) and the Lutheran Church in the Philippines gathered for a regional workshop in Hong Kong. This event was implemented by the Women's Desk of the LWF and led by Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme and Eva von Hertzberg. The aim of the workshop was :

- to outline goals and to design adequate actions for the coming years regarding work with and among women.

First of all, the participants dealt with the needs of women in their respective countries. Emphasis was put on self-awareness of women, theological issues regarding women's role in church and society, education for the different offices in the church, leadership development with special regard to visitation, counselling, Bible study methods, family life, needs of underprivileged groups, different age groups and awareness of international connections affecting the life of the communities.

The participants also discussed and outlined suggestions for future action, concentrating mainly on education for different services.

The participants recognized that the tasks set can be carried out effectively only if each of the churches employs at least one full-time women's secretary. The women felt strongly about the fact that for other concerns of the church full-time staff was employed but work with and among women has to be carried out by volunteers without special training. Therefore, the participants of the Regional Planning Meeting addressed a resolution to their respective synods asking them to employ a women's secretary where such a position does not yet exist.

The group also outlined major points regarding the training of the women's secretary and pointed to the LWF scholarship and exchange programme. They asked their churches to make use of this opportunity for the education of women's secretaries.

Realizing the fact that especially in Hong Kong the tasks can be effectively carried out only in cooperation with all four Lutheran churches, the participants of the Regional Workshop addressed a resolution to their church leaders asking them to support their joint efforts.

The participants of the workshop were also aware of the fact that the work with and among women suffers a great deal because female church workers often lose their jobs after marriage. They urged the churches concerned to pay serious attention to this matter and grant continuity of women's jobs even after marriage, thereby assuming that women workers receive the same treatment as male workers.

In view of the fact that in these churches more and more women enter theological seminaries, the participants addressed a resolution to their churches urging them to consider seriously the question of ordination of women thereby preparing themselves for the new situation.



Special attention was paid to the future programme of the newly founded LUTHERAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP ASSOCIATION in Hong Kong. The group has worked out proposals to be brought before the Executive Committee of the new organization.

In discussing the training possibilities for women leaders, it was unanimously agreed that only very few such opportunities existed for those who wish to receive qualified training. Therefore, the group recommended that the LWF Advisory Committee on Women in the Church considers the possibility of organizing a 10-12 week training programme on the international level. This programme should be attended by the national leaders of the Lutheran women's organizations who then in turn could promote leadership training for women on the national level. As a tentative date for this training programme, the second half of 1977 was suggested.

Besides this training programme emphasis has been put on international exchange through visitation programmes.

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## PAPUA NEW GUINEA

In the fall of 1975 a two-week training seminar for women was partly financed by the LWF Women's Desk. This seminar took place in Goroka and was mainly geared towards Christian education and home economics.

Besides Biblical studies women were taught hygiene, nutrition, child care and to make simple cloths for their children. The seminar which had been lead by Ms. Charlotte Duncker and Ms. Basenuc Habu was appreciated by the leaders of the Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea and by the women of the different districts.

## BRAZIL

Thirty-five women, coming from all four regions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil met for a week in Curitiba to further equip themselves for their work with and among women. The women present were selected from among the leaders of the OASE (Ordem Auxiliadora de Senhoras Evangelicas) the women's organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil. The leadership development seminar was organized by the Women's Desk of the LWF in cooperation with leaders of the OASE.

One of the primary aims of this seminar was to discuss needs of women related to education, employment, family and church, and to help women to plan for future action. The major topics of the seminar were therefore geared towards questions of :

1. Women and labour in Brazil
2. Women and marriage laws in Brazil
3. Community development
4. Bible study methods
5. Organizational techniques



During the seminar, women were re-evaluating their situation and actions in the light of the Gospel and the present needs of church and society. At this occasion the LWF was requested to conduct another leadership development seminar in Brazil in 1977.

The seminar was led by Ms. Anna Lange, Brazil, member of the LWF Advisory Committee on Women in the Church, Ms. Lois Leffer, USA at that time Acting Executive Director of the LCAW, and Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme.

## TANZANIA

Twenty eight women from almost all dioceses and synods of the ELCT attended the leadership development seminar in Moshi, October 12th - 20th, 1976. Aim of this seminar was to further equip women leaders for their tasks within church and society. The subjects of the seminar were chosen by a local preparatory committee and included :

- Methods of Bible study
- Organizational techniques
- Obstacles to women's full participation in society, the need to investigate, organize and act
- Family planning in Tanzania
- The potential role of women in the church
- The relationship between men and women in Martin Luther's teachings
- African leadership in different traditions

The seminar gave the participants the opportunity to evaluate their contribution to the well-being of church and society and to reassess the activities of organized work among women of the ELCT. Two resolutions, one addressed to the ELCT with regard to the leadership development among women, and one addressed to the LWF concerning visitation and exchange programmes for women, were adopted by the participants.

The seminar was led by Ms. Lois Leffler, LCW, USA, Eva von Hertzberg and Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme in cooperation with the leaders of the local preparatory group Ms. Barbara Kniest, Ms. Janet Luvanda and Ms. Veronica Swai.

## BOTSWANA

February 1 - 7, 1977

The leadership Development Seminar for Women in Gaborone, Botswana, February 1st - 7th, 1977 was carried out jointly as a project of the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the World Federation of Methodist Women. Invited were women mainly from countries in Southern Africa. Some of the participants from Lutheran churches came also from other African countries using the possibility to attend this seminar prior to their participation in the All Africa Lutheran Consultation in Gaborone.

Focussing on the problems of rural women in Africa the seminar attempted to redefine the aims and goals of church-related women's organizations. The seminar dealt specially with the following topics :

- Women and rural development
- The New International Economic Order
- Women in the struggle for liberation
- Bible Studies
- Women in the church

The many needs of women in church and society were discussed in groups, where suggestions for possible solutions were also made. The number of recommendations formulated by the seminar included a call for ecumenical cooperation among women's organizations of different denominations and an urgent request to the churches to ordain women into the ministry.

The seminar was led by Ms. Brigalia Bam, World Council fo Churches, Ms. Eva von Hertzberg and Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme, LWF.

## BRAZIL

From October 20th to 26th, 1977, a Leadership Development Seminar for Women, sponsored by the LWF, was held in Camboriu, Santa Catarina,

Brazil. Thirty four participants came from the five regions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil and two from the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Brazil. The seminar was planned by the 'Ordem Auxiliadora de Senhoras Evangélicas' (O.A.S.E.) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil (E L C B). The themes of the recently published document of the ELCB 'catecumenato permanente' were used as the framework for the study and discussion throughout the seminar. The main focus of the Bible studies was on discipleship and its implication for witness and service.

Pastor Wilfried Buchweitz, member of the theological faculty Sao Leopoldo challenged the participants to examine the meaning of diaconia and its application to their life and work. The group was confronted with the necessity of dealing with the root causes as well as the results of social inequalities.

Dr. Walter Altmann, member of the theological faculty Sao Leopoldo, provided additional insights when he highlighted the realities of the Brazilian society. The information presented made the seminar participants keenly aware of the complexities they must consider when planning their programmes.

In the sessions on programme planning special emphasis was placed on the necessity of selecting priorities and goal setting for all activities of O.A.S.E. groups as well as for the Lutheran Women's organization as a whole.



## GUYANA

Twenty-two women from the Lutheran, Methodist, Anglican and Baptist churches of Guyana met at the Anglican Retreat Center, Beterverwagting from 5-13 September 1978 in order to participate in a Leadership Development Seminar for Women organized by the Women's Desk of the Lutheran World Federation.

The opening worship of the seminar was conducted by the President of the Lutheran Church in Guyana, the Rev. Samuel Pillay. At this occasion the representative of the Guyana Council of Churches, the Rev. Best, expressed his appreciation of the fact that the invitation to this seminar was also extended to participants of other denominations. The content of the seminar as outlined by the local preparatory group related to major concerns of women in the church and society of Guyana.

Leila Vandeyar, President of the Methodist Women's Organization, reviewed the role of women in Guyana's history and outlined the desirable role of women in the future of the country.

In her presentation "Women in the family and at work", V. Surrey from CASWIG \*1 emphasized that the building of the socialist society of Guyana would not be possible without the full participation of women on all levels. Ms. Surrey pointed out the fact that in a socialist country everybody has the right to paid work and at the same time both men and women have the obligation to share the tasks related to family and household.

Much attention was given to questions of community services under the leadership of Ms. Enid Forde, Secretary of CASWIG. She emphasized that correct action starts with the identification of needs of the community and encouraged the women to conduct surveys in order to identify the burning problems of the community. In responding to these needs care should be taken that actions be carefully coordinated with other agencies working in the area.

Rev. D. Bisnauth, Director of G.E.S.\*2 presented the topic of "Ecumenical Relationships" in a challenging way by placing the issue in the historical and socio-political contexts of the country. He drew attention to numerous factors influencing the relationships between the different Christian denominations. He expressed the hope that future development within the country will draw the churches to greater unity and cooperation.

Ms. Enid Bynoe, permanent secretary in the Ministry of Labour, emphasized the necessity for the involvement of women in development on local and national levels.

During the entire seminar much attention was given to theoretical and practical studies in organizational techniques. Eva von Hertzberg of the Women's Desk of the Lutheran World Federation served in this area as resource person. Bible studies were conducted by Éva Zabolai-Csekme of the LWF Women's

\*1 CASWIG: Council on the Affairs and Status of Women in Guyana

\*2 G.E.S.: Guyana Extension Seminary



Desk. After intensive group work identifying basic needs, the participants designed plans for future actions and addressed several recommendations to church and state offices.

The seminar closed with an ecumenical worship service, prepared by the participants.

### ADVANCED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR FOR WOMEN

Bossey, Switzerland May 8 - July 15, 1978

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Thirty-seven women including eight ecumenical participants from twenty-six countries met in Bossey/Switzerland for a period of ten weeks in order to explore, discuss, learn, share and develop as human beings. With this Advanced Leadership Development Seminar the Lutheran World Federation attempted to respond to the need of women for further training in the work with and among women. Practically every church has specific activities for women, but the people directing these activities seldom receive specific training for this task.

The seminar concentrated on those areas of concern which had been identified as the most important ones by prior consultations and seminars. They included such topics as "The New International Economic Order", "Dynamics of International Trade", "Occupational Structures", "External and Internal Causes of Poverty", "Theories of Leadership", "Group Behaviour", "The Role of the Church in Domesticating and Liberating Processes", "Ecclesiology", "Feminist Theology", "Ecumenical Studies", "Women in the Mass Media" and "The Changing Role of Women in Church and Society". The selection of these topics alone indicated the change in the perception of the objectives of church-related women's organizations. The discussions throughout the seminar clearly showed that women were in the process of assuming their roles as co-creators of their societies' future.

Through the sharing information about their cultural, social and political backgrounds, the participants contributed to the "personalization" of world affairs. As one participant put it: "Now when I read about Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, I will look at the events with different eyes, because now I know somebody who lives there".

The variety of cultures, concerns and problems facing women around the world also produced some unusual confrontations during the long seminar at Bossey. But it was unity, not diversity, which impressed the participants. Said a German pastor, "women's lives around the world are sometimes different. But there are points where African women and Asian women and European women have the same difficulties, for instance, in winning awareness of their power, influencing decisions and changing the whole structure of church life to meet women's interests".

Those could be powerful words, drawn from powerful impressions of the participants in the LWF seminar. The seminar ended July 15, and the women dispersed to all continents of the globe. But in another way the seminar did not end, but will continue in the lives of the women who came together to unite their faith, their aspirations, and perhaps to change the church and the world.

This seminar also represented a unique effort of cooperation between different governmental and non-governmental organizations. Dr. Lois Leffler was released for the entire ten weeks by Lutheran Church Women, one of the major Lutheran women's organizations in the USA in order that she could serve as resident leader of the seminar. The list of speakers further included several staff members of both the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches as well as staff of the ILO, UNCTAD, UNDP, WHO, IFDA (International Foundation for Development Alternatives) and WACC (World Association of Christian Communication), representing different continents.

The participants in the seminar made the following statement and passed the following recommendations:

STATEMENT:

We are partners with God in the continuing creation for a world of love and fulfillment. We reaffirm our faith in God's sustaining love through which all people are drawn to the Lord. We also reaffirm the dignity of all humanity. We rejoice in the renewal of God's people through faith and make ourselves available for communication with and service to others. As church women in witness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will work to support the development of each individual in our community and nation, not forgetting the development of women, thus supporting the development of the world.

We recognize that each individual is a unique whole consisting of body, mind and spirit. We recognize that each person has the right to satisfy his/her basic needs to sustain life, to receive education, to receive medical assistance to be healthy, and to receive the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Christ is our model, the Bible is our guide and the world is our arena. We are bound together as a confessing community and a professing people in a world in which Christ does not exclude Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, Christian nor non-Christian. He calls all to be one in Him.

Because of the ignorance and pride of our societies and our disobedience to the will of God, we have been hindered from developing to our fullest potential as women. As a result the humanity of both men and women was curtailed and humanity as a whole could not develop to its fullest potential. We urge all people to build a society in which women and men work as partners in all areas of life, working together not only in the



family but also in the social, political, economic and church structures, thereby participating fully in the building of God's Kingdom.

As Christians we have a prophetic role to envision our societies, not as they are, but as they can become in Christ. In envisioning and building new societies, change is inevitable. The church must seek to live its prophetic role and work for changes which have a positive force, enabling every child, woman and man to develop to their fullest and to live in a just and humane society. As Christians, we also have a priestly role to daily sacrifice ourselves to be a friend and advocate of the poor and oppressed of humanity. We are God's people weeping with those who weep, rejoicing with those who rejoice, living in the hope of the Resurrection and praying that we will be faithful.

#### RECOMMENDATION TO THE LWF WOMEN'S DESK:

The participants of the Advanced Leadership Development Seminar in Bossey, Switzerland, May 8 - July 15, 1978 recognized the value of this seminar to themselves as persons and to their responsibilities both within the church and the society,

They further recognized that the training of leaders is an ongoing process which needs to be systematically sustained,

They further recognized that follow-up, training and consultative services would be a significant way of reinforcing previous learning and introducing new information and skills,

therefore it is recommended that

- a) regional leadership training seminars be conducted for women;
- b) consultative services be provided following the seminars;
- c) within a five-year period as many of the persons as possible who were attending the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar in Bossey 1978 meet together in a seminar to evaluate the results and plan for the future;
- d) within three years the persons attending the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar in Bossey in 1978 meet in regional groups to increase knowledge and build and/or revise strategies of action;
- e) the LWF Women's Desk serve as the initiator and coordinator of a communication network particularly related to the needs and interest of participants attending the Bossey Seminar 1978;
- f) the LWF Women's Desk include in the publication "WOMEN" an annotated bibliography of resources available, which address issues such as identity, image building, language, etc.;



- g) an International Leadership Development Seminar be conducted again within a four-year period.

#### RECOMMENDATION TO WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS:

The participants of the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar for women May 8 - July 15, 1978 in Bossey /Switzerland searched for ways to utilize the talents of both women and men to build a more just and humane society. In their search the group recognized that increased solidarity among women throughout the world could contribute to this in a significant way.

Therefore it is recommended that church women's organizations be challenged to cooperate with other church women's organizations and other governmental or non-governmental organizations in order to have a greater impact within the church and society and to make the best use of available human, financial and other resources.

#### RECOMMENDATION TO LWF AND MEMBER CHURCHES:

We, the participants of the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar meeting in Bossey, Switzerland, May 8 - July 15, 1978 recognized the importance of theological education in the life of the church.

We further recognized that changes both within the church and in society place new demands upon persons being theologically trained.

We therefore recommend that

- a) required courses related to women's studies and human rights issues be included in the curricula of theological seminaries and faculties, and that theological education equip both men and women to deal with these issues;
- b) theological education should emphasize both local and global perspectives.

#### RECOMMENDATION TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES:

We, the participants of the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar, Bossey /Switzerland, May 8 - July 15, 1978 recognized that in our churches more than 50 % of the members are women many of whom are extremely capable, yet they have few opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes of our churches.

We recommend

that church related decision-making bodies at all levels include 50 % women;

and we affirm

our readiness as leaders of our church women's organizations to provide the necessary training for them.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE LWF AND ITS MEMBER CHURCHES:

We, the participants of the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar in Bossey /Switzerland, May 8 - July 15, 1978

recommend

- a) that the criteria for awarding scholarships be reviewed, giving particular attention to the needs of the country and to the level of education required to meet these needs;
- b) that a decision to award 30 % of the available funds to women be implemented;
- c) and that application procedures for scholarships be revised to ensure a more equitable distribution of funds among women and men.

RECOMMENDATION TO WCC AND LWF:

The participants of the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar for Women, May 8 - July 15, 1978 in the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland recognized the fact that members of decision-making bodies (commissions, committees, etc.) and executive staff of the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation are mostly men; we further recognized that this inadequacy is poor stewardship because the potentials and capacities of women are not adequately utilized, thereby deterring the development of the whole Christian community.

Therefore it is recommended that strategies be built and implemented to include increased numbers of talented and capable women from all continents in the decision-making bodies and executive staff.

RECOMMENDATION TO WCC AND LWF:

The LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar participants meeting in Bossey /Switzerland, May 8 - July 15, 1978 recognized the fact that in the development and financing of programmes and projects the concerns and participation of women are often excluded.



They further recognized that the contribution of women, also in areas traditionally regarded as the domain of men, would creatively enrich these areas and would contribute to the building of a just, humane and peaceful society.

Therefore it is recommended that all programmes and projects of the LWF and WCC relate to women's concerns and take their participation fully into account.

#### RECOMMENDATION TO LWF AND WCC:

The participants of the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar meeting in Bossey /Switzerland, May 8 - July 15, 1978 recognized the importance of communication to individuals, organizations and society.

We further recognized its impact in image building and formulation of public opinion.

We also recognized the minimal amount of information reported regarding the contribution of women to the mission of the church.

It is therefore recommended

- a) that training experiences in mass media be conducted for women and men;
- b) that communications include reporting the contributions of women to the life of the church and that in the reporting process a conscious effort be made to affirm the role of women.

#### RECOMMENDATION TO LWF AND WCC:

The participants of the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar meeting in Bossey /Switzerland, May 8 - July 15, 1978 recognized the role of WCC and LWF in assisting the churches in their partnership in mission.

We further recognized that many church members are uninformed about the WCC and LWF.

It is therefore recommended that more opportunities be provided to inform the church membership about WCC and LWF, and that WCC and LWF develop aids to assist the churches in presenting this information.



#### RECOMMENDATION TO THE CHURCHES:

The participants of the LWF Advanced Leadership Development Seminar meeting in Bossey /Switzerland, May 8 - July 15, 1978 recognized that not all churches ordain women and that preventing women from being ordained deprives the churches of developing to their fullest potential and denies women the possibility of responding to God's call to the ordained ministry.

It is therefore recommended that theologically educated women be ordained and be accepted as full partners in the ministry of the church.

#### LIBERIA /WEST-AFRICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN'S SEMINAR

October 29 - November 5, 1978

Under the theme "Women and Development in Church and Society", 42 women from Lutheran churches in Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria met for the first time in a joint leadership development seminar in Monrovia, Liberia, October 29 to November 5, 1978. The seminar, sponsored by the LWF, was planned and conducted by a local committee chaired by Casselia Stewart, the president of Lutheran Church Women in Liberia. Ms. Stewart is also the vice-chairperson of the LWF Commission on Studies.

Also participating in the seminar were four members of the LWF Advisory Committee for Women, coming from Indonesia, Guyana, Finland and the German Democratic Republic, who used this opportunity to familiarize themselves with the problems and questions of women in this region of the world. The Advisory Committee held its meeting after the end of the seminar at the same place.

The participants of the seminar addressed several recommendations to their churches and to the LWF. They asked the LWF to encourage member churches to give theological training to women so that they may be prepared for the ordained ministry, and to ensure that information about LWF scholarships is disseminated among women.

They also requested that continued emphasis be put on the provision of leadership development opportunities for women on the local, regional and international level.

Noting that illiteracy is still one of the problems in their societies, the participants asked that the member churches should incorporate in their ministry programmes the use of visual aids and that the LWF should emphasize the training of women in the production and use of visual aids.

## INDIA / LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR FOR AELC WOMEN \*

December 1 - 7, 1978

A request was made for the ordination of women in the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church as a result of a women's leadership development seminar under the sponsorship of the Lutheran World Federation and under the theme "Women as Agents of Change in Family, Church and Society". Representing the LWF Women's Desk the Rev. Eva Zabolai-Csekme gave a lecture on "the Mission of the Church".

At the seminar, held December 1-7, 1978, twenty-six women meeting at Gurukul Theological College and Research Institute in Madras also asked the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church to give employment to theologically trained women and asked that women constitute 50% of all administrative bodies in the church.

They also requested that two of the officers of the church be women and that scholarships for theological education be provided to women.

In recommendations addressed to the LWF, the seminar asked for help to establish an office for work with and among women in the AELC, and asked for additional seminars for women and men in leading positions in the church that would deal with the issue of partnership and women's concerns.

The seminar expressed appreciation that at the last Assembly of the LWF, 22% of the delegates were women and that 6 women are on the present LWF Executive Committee. It recommended that at the next Assembly 33% of the delegates should be women and that at least 10 women be elected to the 30-member Executive Committee. Two of the LWF Officers should be women, including the position of the President.

Addressing the seminar, Ms. Renuka Somasekhar, Principal of the Women's Christian College, said "refusing ordination to women is a sin". Ms. T.S.R. Matthew, a member of the AELC and a member of the World Council of Churches' Central Committee said "there is no theological ground for denying ordination to women simply because they are women".

Change is also needed in family structures and in the church, the seminar participants agreed. Ms. Shanthi Solomon, Executive Secretary of the All Asia Christian Conference for Women stated that women are expected to serve the church at local level but not on the decision making bodies.

Ms. Somasekhar said that mothers need to change their attitudes so that they will bring up their daughters and sons with equal social rights and educational opportunities.

Recommendations from the women's leadership development seminar also included proposals to expand the type of training given to women in the church and an increased role for women in community development projects.

\* The AELC (Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church) is the second largest Lutheran Church in India and has about 300,000 members.



## VIENNA / AUSTRIA

### WOMEN AND WORLD DISARMAMENT

#### International Seminar for Women

For five days in April, women from 23 countries met in Vienna, Austria, to confer on their mutual desire for world peace and disarmament, citing the effects of the arms race on women and women's involvement in peace education efforts. During this time together, the women built and strengthened bonds of international friendship -- a sign of hope set against a backdrop of nuclear arms proliferation and its potential for mass destruction.

Held from April 17 - 21, 1978, the Seminar drew 82 women representing 34 non-governmental organizations. The event was organized by six NGOs, among them the LWF. The opening session in the Old Townhall of Vienna, to which the public was also invited and at which the list of speakers included Ms. Helvi Sipilä, United Nations Assistant Secretary General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Dr. Herta and Paul Amirson, Minister of Science and Research of Austria, and Ms. Liselotte Waldheim-Natural, Chief, Center for Disarmament, Geneva Unit, was chaired by The Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme. The LWF was further represented by Dr. Marianne Flügge and Ms. Ursula Gertz, both from the FRG; Ms. Casselia Stewart, Liberia; and Ms. Wendy Ward, USA.

Informal exchanges of ideas and information flourished amidst the plenary sessions and scheduled small groups discussions, often overcoming political and cultural differences (and sometimes language barriers as well). Receiving particular attention were the three designated topics for the conference: social and economic consequences of the arms race to women and the family; peace and disarmament education, particularly through mass media and educational structures; and involving and organizing women in peace and disarmament work.

During the working sessions, participants cited the ways in which high military expenditures slowed economic and social development, caused unemployment and inflation in many industrialized countries, and threatened the struggle for national independence in developing countries. "Women (and children) are often the first victims of unmet human needs due to high military spending," conferees noted. Delegates made a strong plea that women raise their voices to halt the astronomical expenditures for the military and divert the funds to relieve the misery of poverty and hunger and provide for economic development.

At the conference's final session the participants adopted a statement on disarmament to be sent to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, which was convened at the UN in May. This message asserted that "Women call for general and complete disarmament" and outlined proposals, including a halt on development and deployment of new weapons (such as the neutron bomb); a ban on all nuclear weapons and destruction of current stockpiles; conversion from military to socially useful production; and peace/disarmament education efforts.



Among the concrete suggestions for peace education methods were those of continued meetings of women, particularly in conjunction with the UN Decade for Women; use of existing media channels -- radio, television, and publications -- to promote news about peace actions and views on disarmament; on-going exchange of information between women from various countries; initiatives to train teachers in peace education and to screen text books to rid them of images of war, hatred, racism and sexism, replacing them with images of peace, cooperation, and coexistence; and use of visual arts and music.

During the final working session, women spoke about their concern for the importance of public opinion and the need for mass movements and actions, especially an intensified campaign against the neutron bomb with rallies and marches. They saw the vital need for promoting understanding among peoples of the world and eliminating cold war "enemy" images, along with peace activities which underscore the relationship between the arms race and other issues, such as hunger and oppression, and which speak to women on all levels.

#### INDIA / INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR FOR WOMEN

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Besides the participants from India nine international participants (from Indonesia, Malaysia and Tanzania) took part in the seminar, which was held at the Gurukul Research and Training Institute, Madras, November 19-26, 1979.

The major topics of the seminar were as follows:

1. Bible Study and Bible Study Methods
2. Organizational Techniques
3. Methods of Evangelization
4. Christian Love and Social Justice

Dr. Lois Leffler, chairperson of the Advisory Committee of the LWF Women's Desk, served as major leader and resource person of the seminar.



## Research

Church statements made in the last decades have repeatedly spoken of new or transformed tasks of the church. It is generally acknowledged that the church needs the increased participation of women. This can be achieved by women making greater commitments to full-time, part-time and volunteer jobs in the church and in the congregations. Partnership as a principle of conduct is generally agreed to, but difficulties clearly arise when it comes to its practical application within social structures. Since women's participation is indispensable for solving problems in our churches and societies, we have a vested interest in examining why attempts at practising partnership fail.

The old question of the woman's role in church and society remains an enduring issue for various reasons. The theological problem of understanding the relationship between men and women requires greater attention today because both research in depth and general psychology challenge traditional conceptions. At least four factors compel us to consider the woman's issue seriously:

- the question of how we can lead a humane life in a technological world that exerts specific pressures on men and women;
- renewed interest in emancipation: passionate discussions about the roles adopted by men and women reveal that neither theology nor the church has seriously come to terms with the women's movements of the 19th and 20th centuries;
- the search for new forms of life-style that cut across class, churches of different confessions, and diverse groups within each church;
- the relationship between human beings and nature: attempts to devise a concept of man and woman that is based on their mutual responsibility for the whole of creation.

In order to contribute towards the understanding of those factors, the LWF Department of Studies commissioned a study project:

### WOMEN AS INNOVATIVE GROUPS

This research project which uses the word "innovation" to indicate efforts to reduce misery and fear and to eliminate lack of freedom and injustice in all aspects of human life, is being carried out through the German National Committee of the LWF in cooperation with the Commission on Studies of the LWF. The scientific direction of the research is carried out by Dr. Gerta Scharffenorth, FRG with OKR Gudrun Diestel, FRG heading the administrative responsibilities.



Initially a group of experts from different fields developed a study plan. Limited resources, however, forced the group to concentrate on a few main points from a larger catalogue of problems. The areas of research were outlined as follows:

1. Survey of available literature and reports
2. Theological studies on the cooperation of women in the church
3. Studies on church practice
4. Studies on educational theory and teaching methodology concerning the woman's role in church and society
5. Studies on the position of women in the working world
6. New forms of partnership
7. Diakonia.

The actual research is carried out through theological faculties, research institutes and individual experts. At the moment the studies are in different stages of completion. Some have already been finished and translated into English, ready to be published. Others are in the process of completion, and some are still in the planning stage.

So far, seven volumes of this study have been published by Burkhardtthaus Verlag, Gelnhausen/Berlin, and three more are scheduled to appear in 1981. The volumes already published are as follows:

- Volume 1: Gerta Scharffenorth, Klaus Thraede: "Freunde in Christus werden..." Die Beziehung von Mann und Frau als Frage an Theologie und Kirche. ("Friends in Christ..." The relationship between man and woman as a challenge to theology and the church.)
- Volume 2: Frank Crüsemann, Hartwig Thyen: "Als Mann und Frau geschaffen". Exegetische Studien zur Rolle der Frau im AT und NT. ("Created as Man and Woman". Exegetical studies on the role of women in the Old and New Testaments.)
- Volume 3: Sammelband: Claudia Pinl, Mechthild Fischer, Erika Reichle, A. Lissner, M.D. Groot, Rachel C. Wahlberg, Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel: "Frauen auf neuen Wegen". Studien und Problemberichte zur Situation der Frauen in Kirche und Gesellschaft. ("Women on New Paths". The situation of women in church and society.)
- Volume 4: Silvia Kontos, Karin Walser: "Weil nur zählt, was Geld einbringt..." Probleme der Hausfrauenarbeit. ("Only Salaried Work counts..." Problems of Housework.)
- Part 1: Critique of the scientific analysis of housework
- Part 2: Attempt to build a theory
- Part 3: Evaluation of group discussions with housewives in convalescent homes for mothers.



- Volume 5: Frauenarbeit der Evangelischen Landeskirche in Württemberg: "Wir Frauen in der Kirche". Eine Selbststudie zur organisierten Frauenarbeit. ("We Women in the Church". A Self Study.)
- Volume 6: Annette Kuhn, Gerda Torniepoth: "Frauenbildung und Geschlechtsrolle". Historische und erziehungswissenschaftliche Studien zum Wandel der Frauenrolle in Familie und Gesellschaft. ("Education of Women and Sex Roles".)
- Volume 7: Ingrid Lukatis, Anna-Barbara Nass: "Phantasie für sich und andere". Mitarbeit von Frauen und neue Formen der Frauenarbeit in der Kirche. ("Inventiveness for Oneself and Others".)

Originally the study was expected to be concluded by the end of 1980. However, due to delay in research and printing and due to the fact that the study receives growing interest, the research will have to be carried on into 1981.

As the volumes were published in German, they created great interest and a desire to share them with the English-speaking world. As a result it was decided to translate into English those studies which are considered to also have relevance outside Germany. The search for a publishing house in the USA has also started, but has so far brought no success. The volumes are considered "too scholarly for the American public", and publishing houses have not been prepared to print them mainly for the use of the scholar. The Women's Desk has finally succeeded in making the following arrangements with the WCC:

In the course of the coming three years, three English volumes will be published through the WCC with the following content:

- Volume one: Klaus Thraede: "Trouble with Freedom". A historical study on women in the Early Church.
- Volume two: Gerta Scharffenorth: "Friends in Christ", plus one other study, both relating to the Reformation period.
- Volume three: Studies concerning the twentieth century, among them: Erika Reichle: "The Ordination of Women" and Henriette Visser't Hooft: "Correspondence with Karl Barth concerning women" and two other essays.

## Newsletter : "Women"

The purpose of this newsletter relating to work with and among women in the LWF member churches is as follows:

- a) to improve communication between women of member churches on the international level;
- b) to be a forum for exchange of ideas and programmes;
- c) to inform about and document special concerns and issues related to women;
- d) to encourage women's groups and organizations in their work.

Reports indicate that the newsletter is appreciated and is being requested by women from all walks of life in Lutheran member churches as well as by other church organizations and secular institutions. At present, there are about 950 names on the mailing list.

At its meeting in Mexico, January 1980, the Advisory Committee made the following additional suggestions for the content of the newsletter:

- a) that in the future, materials should be included with clear instructions as to how to use them as resource materials for group work (methods for group work, suggested questions and suggested reading materials);
- b) that in the future, each issue should focus on a particular topic, such as: explanation of present socio-economic structures which determine the condition of women, strengthening of family life, and Bible study materials;
- c) one of the next issues should mention that important UN materials are available through local and regional UN offices;
- d) that the present practice of responding to a "year" as devoted by the United Nations to a particular group, such as women, children, the handicapped, should be continued in the future.

## Lutheran World

As a contribution to International Women's Year, the first issue of Lutheran World (Lutherische Rundschau) in 1975 was devoted mainly to the concerns of women. Articles written by women about problems related to women were published in this issue. Since the appearance of this collection of articles, the issue has been used several times as preparatory materials for seminars and consultations.



## International Exchange for Continuing Education

The purpose of this programme is to further development of advanced leadership among women. It enables women leaders to participate in international events (consultations, meetings, seminars and workshops), which are related to the issues and needs with which they, and the churches they serve, are concerned. Through such experiences, those that participate are able to broaden their understanding, see their needs and problems from an international perspective, and gain information and new ideas as to how others are dealing with similar problems.

This programme, which responds to a real need of women in the churches, was initiated in 1977.

In 1977 the following persons participated in international meetings:

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|--|---|
| 1. Ms. Casselia Stewart,<br>Liberia      | ECA Regional Consultation on the<br>Integration of Women in Development,<br>Nouakchott, Mauritania, 27/9 - 2/10,<br>1977. |
| 2. Ms. Janeth Lwanda,                    | WCC Consultation of Church Women<br>Executives, Glion, Switzerland,<br>1977.  |
| 3. Ms. Veronica Swai,<br>(both) Tanzania |   |
| 4. Ms. Aune Shilongo,<br>Namibia         | Women and Worship - Rooted in the<br>New Creation, Madison, Wisconsin,<br>April 1977.                                     |

In 1978:

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Ms. Casselia Stewart,<br>Liberia | Women and World Disarmament - Inter-<br>national Seminar for Women, Vienna,<br>Austria, April 1978. |
| 2. Ms. Ursula Gertz, F.R.G.         |   |
| 3. Dr. Marianne Flügge, F.R.G.      |   |
| 4. Ms. Wendy Ward, U.S.A.           |   |
| 5. Ms. Lydie Engoutou,<br>Cameroon  | Winter Course, Ecumenical Institute,<br>Bossey, Switzerland, Fall 1978.                             |
| 6. Dr. Agnes Moderegger,<br>F.R.G.  | Forum Européen des Comités nationaux<br>des Laïcs, Luxembourg, June 1978.                           |
| 7. Ms. Soon Hi Park,<br>Korea       | 6th Assembly of Asian Church Women's<br>Conference, Japan, 1978.                                    |

In 1979:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Ms. Sarojini Sathiyavathi,            | World Assembly of the World Union of<br>Catholic Women's Organizations,<br>Bangalore, India, February 1979. |
| 2. Ms. Bondu Subhashini,<br>(both) India |   |



3. Ms. Helen Klingberg, Norway "Swords into Ploughshares: Practical Paths to Peace", organized by Pax Christi, London, U.K., November 1979.
4. Ms. Betty Vang, Denmark
5. Ms. Suguna Edwin, Malaysia LWF International Leadership Development Seminar for Women, Madras, India, November 1979.
6. Ms. Josephine Thomas, Malaysia
7. Ms. Janeth Luwanda, Tanzania
8. Ms. Rose Mahenge, Tanzania
9. Ms. Joyce Sendoro, Tanzania
10. Ms. L. Manalu, Indonesia
11. Ms. Erika Anna Simanjuntak, Indonesia
12. Ms. Mary Soon, Malaysia
13. Ms. Leong Seng Kee, Malaysia

In 1980:

1. Ms. Maria Rückert, Brazil Attending the preparatory meeting for the LWF Latin American Consultation, Caracas, January 1980.
2. Rev. Ingeborg Köhler, G.D.R. Visit to churches in Peru and Cuba, January 1980.
3. Ms. Raja Kumari, India Visit to Lutheran Churches in Hong Kong and attending the Ecumenical Assembly of Church Women United, Los Angeles, June 1980.
4. Ms. Ruth Besha, Tanzania World Conference of the UN Decade for Women, Copenhagen, July 1980.
5. Ms. Gisela Sandri Ott, Brazil
6. Ms. Bertha Simamora, Indonesia
7. Sister Hildegard Hertel, Brazil Assembly of Lutheran Church Women, Atlanta, Georgia, August 1980
8. Ms. E. Mwakalambo, Tanzania Conference for Women Theologicians, Ibadan, Nigeria, September 1980
9. Ms. Barbara Narzynsky, Poland World Day of Prayer. European Conference in Edinburgh, September 1980
10. Ms. Maria Klein, Romania

## Cooperation with International Organizations

During the past five years staff of the Women's Desk participated in several international and local meetings of different denominations as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations. At several such occasions staff has served as adviser, lecturer or Bible study leader. Through these contacts lines of communication with other organizations were built up and cooperation strengthened. Some examples follow:

### 1. Y W C A

Éva Zabolai-Csekme gave three lectures at the International Training Seminar of the YWCA in Switzerland 1972.

### 2. A C W C

Éva Zabolai-Csekme participated in the Assembly of the Asian Church Women's Conference held in Bangkok, Thailand, October 1974.

### 3. W U C W O

Éva Zabolai-Csekme participated in the planning meeting of the Executive Committee of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, which was held in Paris, April 1975.

### 4. PRO MUNDI VITA

The Women's Desk was one of the co-sponsoring bodies of the PRO MUNDI VITA consultation on "Women and Men as Partners in Christian Communities" held in Louvain, Belgium, August 1975.

### 5. U N

- The Lutheran World Federation has been represented at the UN conference of the International Women's Year in Mexico City, Mexico, June 1975 by Ms. Katakshamma Benjamin, India and Dr. Dorothy Marple, USA.
- At the United Nations Conference for the International Women's Decade held in Copenhagen, Denmark, July 1980, the Lutheran World Federation was represented by: Ms. Ruth Besha, Tanzania, Dr. Kathryn Kopf, USA, Ms. Gisela Sandri Ott, Brazil, Ms. Bertha Simamora, Indonesia and Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme, staff of the LWF Women's Desk.

### 6. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF SOCIALIST WOMEN

At the consultation of this organization, organized in connection with the International Women's Year in Berlin, DDR, October 1975, the LWF has been represented through Rev. Irene König, DDR.

### 7. W F M W

Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme was the Bible study leader at the Assembly

of the World Federation of Methodist Women held in Dublin, Ireland, August 1976.

#### 8. Y W C A

Responsibility for Bible studies was taken over by the staff of the Women's Desk at the International seminar of the YWCA, held in Geneva, Switzerland, September 1976.

#### 9. CONFERENCE OF NGOs (Sub-Committee on the Status of Women of the NGO Committee on Human Rights)

This sub-committee works in several working groups. The LWF Women's Desk gave special attention to two of these:

##### a) Working Group on Disarmament

It was under the auspices of this working group that the International Seminar on "Women and World Disarmament" was organized in Vienna, Austria, April 1978. The Women's Desk of the LWF was one of the co-sponsors.

##### b) Working Group on Female Circumcision

Éva Zabolai-Csekme is a member of this working group, which supports locally based activities aiming at elimination of the practice through sharing of information, financial support and cooperation with interested UN agencies.

#### 10. W H O

In 1977 Éva Zabolai-Csekme was invited to render consultative services to the WHO regarding their intention to set up a Women's Desk. In the course of 1979/80 she has provided the Director General of WHO with comprehensive documentation on the issue of Women and Development.

#### 11. I L O

In August 1979, the International Labour Office organized two meetings to plan "women-related" programmes for the 1980s. Éva Zabolai-Csekme was invited to these meetings as the only consultant from outside the ILO.

#### 12. J U N I C

In October 1979 the Joint UN Information Committee organized two meetings under the leadership of UNICEF, one on Primary Health Care and one on Women and Development. Éva Zabolai-Csekme served as a consultant to the first meeting and as a consultant and rapporteur to the second.

#### 13. Ad-hoc JUNIC/ NGO DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION WORKING GROUP ON WOMEN

In order to enhance the "women's angle" of development education, the following organizations formed an ad-hoc working group: IFDA (Inter-

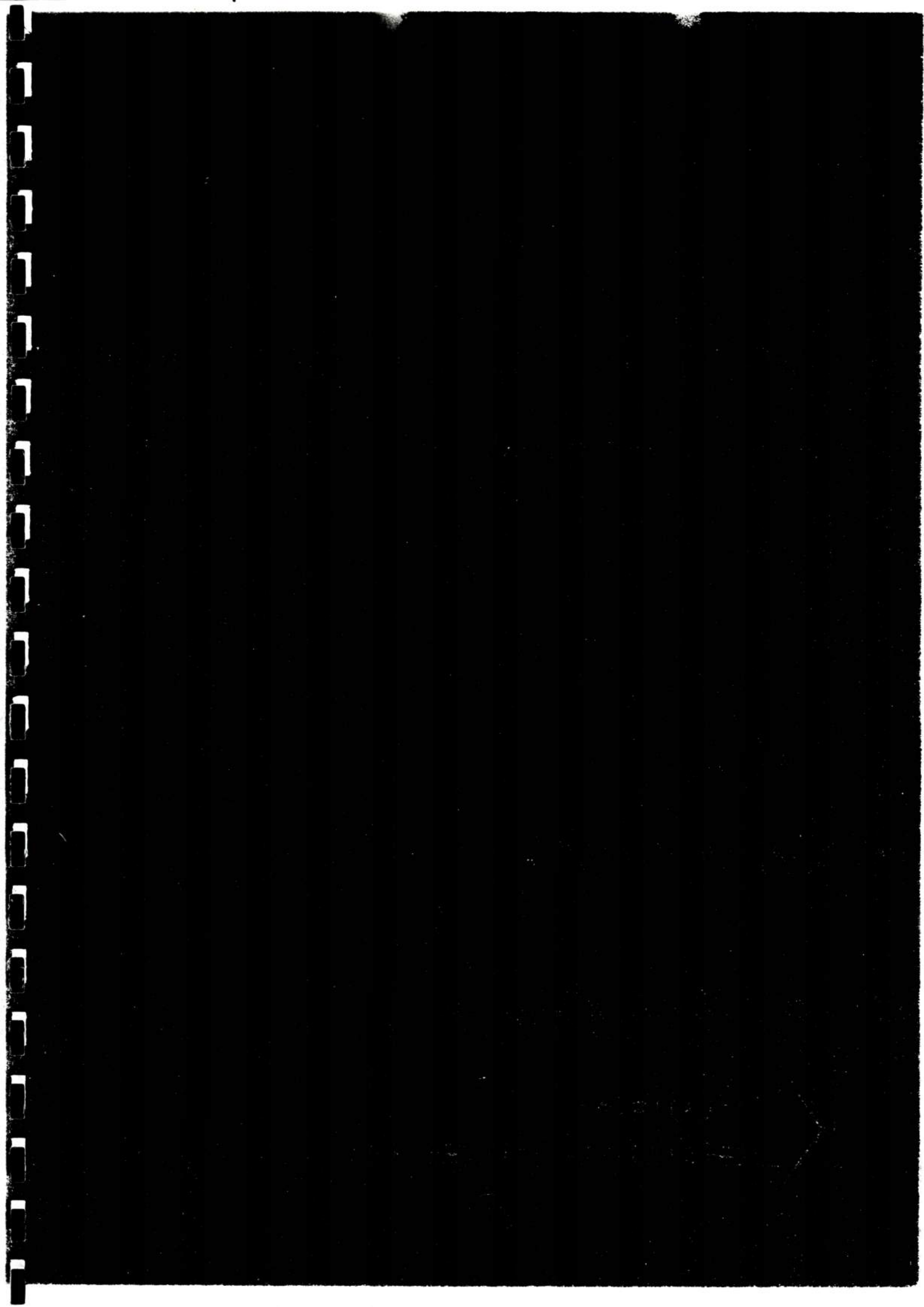


national Federation for Development Alternatives), ILO, LWF, RBI (Rädda Barnen International), UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, World YWCA. The immediate plans of this group consist of the preparation of five development education kits concerning women:

1. Handicapped women
2. Women, water and sanitation
3. Women and food
4. Women and health
5. Women and skills.

In response to the request by the Advisory Committee concerning research related to women and in order to better coordinate activities with other international organizations, documentation from relevant agencies has been gathered and evaluated. Summaries of activities concerning the improvement of the status of women of different international organizations have been prepared.





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## LWF International Consultation for Women in Colombo, Sri Lanka December 1976

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Colombo, SRI LANKA, was the setting for the latest meeting on an international level of Lutheran women from all over the world - the first since the consultation in Bastad, SWEDEN in 1969. The Bastad consultation had brought about a decisive change in that it had initiated the hiring of an LWF woman executive staff member to start work with and among Lutheran women on the international level. As a result of this, a communication network between women of the different member churches had been built up, leadership development seminars had been organized and efforts to improve the situation of women in their churches and societies had been started. Seven years later it was clear that a start had been made but it was also obvious that a tremendous task still needed to be accomplished. "What have we accomplished in the past years and what should be our direction for the future?" were questions asked by the participants of the 1976 consultation whose task was nothing less than to evaluate past activities and to plan the next steps for the years ahead. This 1976 consultation brought together the largest and most representative group of women from Lutheran churches since the beginning of the LWF. Among the 74 participants at the consultation

48 were delegates of member churches and 18 attended the consultation as resource persons, ecumenical delegates and guests. Besides the staff of the LWF Women's Desk the General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, Dr. Carl Mau was present during the entire consultation. The presence of a large number of ecumenical delegates reflected the wish of Lutheran women around the world to establish closer contacts with women's organizations of other denominations. Recognizing that women of different denominations are engaged in the same struggle, the participants expressed a strong desire to coordinate LWF activities with the activities of other denominational and ecumenical women's organizations. (Present were representatives from the Asian Church Women's Conference, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the World Federation of Methodist Women, the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations and the World Young Women's Christian Association.)

Greatly contributing to the success of the consultation were the different experts sent by several governmental and non-governmental organizations such as the Asian Women's Institute, the Economic and Social Council of Asia and the Pacific, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labour



Office and the International Planned Parenthood Federation. Representatives of these organizations shared their expertise with the different working groups and their advice with regard to the planning process was greatly appreciated.

The largest proportion of delegates came from member churches in Asia, which sent 16 women to the consultation. This was a determining factor in selecting the location of the consultation. The European churches sent 15, churches of Africa 9, churches of North America 6, and churches of Latin America 2.

The opening communion service was presided by Rev. Maria Barutzky, (FRG) after which Dr. Carl Mau welcomed the participants in an opening address.

The two major topics of the consultation were *"Women and Human Development"* and *"Women and Proclamation"*. These topics were not selected randomly as they represented those areas which emerged from different leadership development seminars as the most important ones. Furthermore, when planning the seminar it was felt that a thorough dealing with those questions was a necessity if one wanted to be able to plan in a responsible way for the future.

Two major lectures were delivered on the topic *"Women and Human Development"*. One was given by Dr. Krishna Patel, a lawyer and economist from India, who is presently employed by the International Labour Office as programme officer for women workers questions. In her presentation entitled *"Self-Reliance for Women"*, Dr. Patel described the various kinds of oppression in working and in private life which women experience in all countries, whether developing or industrialized.

Their burdens vary in degree, but the facts remain that in all countries women have limited job opportunities, get the lowest wages and are the first to be let go in times of economic crisis. In most places in the world women work far more than men. However, their work does not appear in statistics, because only paid labour is accounted for and does not include the physically often more exhausting work in the household and in the fields that is done by women. According to ILO research women of Western Europe, holding jobs outside the home, work 60 - 90 hours a week, while employed men work 40 - 48 hours. In Leningrad 2/3 of women suffer continuous exhaustion yet public opinion is not concerned with that fact. In rural areas of developing countries women carry out heavy physical labour from early morning to late evening and that is regarded as "natural", as a matter of course.

According to Dr. Patel the solution of this complex problem is self-reliance for women. (She used the term "self-reliance" in a broader sense, meaning also self-support, independence and self-confidence.) The greatest problem for women is dependence and the immobility resulting from it. Women do not exercise control over their destinies and do not as yet have adequate bargaining power. It is always someone else who decides what their options are. As a result, in the economic and social field women move from one non-choice to another.

Dr. Patel called on women to start unlearning the habit of dependence through instituting special types of educational measures that would make a woman aware of her dependent status. In learning to be self-reliant she can become the master of her body, mind and destiny. She further concluded that no country could call



itself self-reliant as long as half its population, the women, continue to be in a state of dependence.

The second major lecture on the topic "*Women and Human Development*" was given by Dr. Mechtild Fischer, officer in the women's affairs task-force at the ministry of Nordrhein-Westfalia, Federal Republic of Germany. In her presentation Dr. Fischer stressed the importance of solidarity and partnership among women. By solidarity she meant the mutual willingness to support each other. Partnership was described as the determination to cooperate while learning the ability to carry out conflicts. Without developing solidarity and partnership among each other women are not capable of contributing decisively to human development. In making some practical suggestions Dr. Fischer urged women :

- to cooperate in social and religious movements and (at the beginning) to pay special attention to their own interest in family, church, trade unions, etc;
- to work on conflicts of their own societies and on conflicts between their own and other societies;
- to make the first steps towards activity in areas of common interest ;
- to analyse power-structures without regarding them as unchangeable; to be flexible and to use creative fantasy;
- to create a common empirical level possibly on the international scene in order to solve conflicts and to experience success jointly.

In order to illustrate the necessity of women's involvement in concerns related to human development Ms. Jane Cottingham presented a case study, entitled : "*Bottle Babies*".

This case study was selected for two reasons :

- a) it presented a concern which is common to women from both developing and industrialized countries;
- b) it demonstrated that actions of caring people can produce some change.

The presentation by Ms. Cottingham and the film :*Bottle Babies* stressed the problems which arise from bottle-feeding infants especially in developing countries. Through the advertisements of large multinational companies women in developing countries are led to believe that bottle-feeding is better than breast-feeding. Well-meaning they turn to bottle-feeding without being equipped with clean water and other necessary hygienic conditions and without being in the position to afford to follow the instructions carefully. The result is often malnutrition, disease and finally death.

It is important that women be made aware of the scientific facts on the one hand and of the negative effects of advertizing on the other.

These lectures by Dr. Patel, Dr. Fischer and Ms. Jane Cottingham greatly contributed to the ability and willingness of sisters coming from industrialized and developing nations to start an open and honest dialogue with each other in solidarity. Another contributing factor was the rather homogenous background of the participants which reflected the overall middle class character of Lutheran churches. This fact was pointed out on several occasions when the participants were reminded not to limit their efforts to concerns directly affecting middle class Lutheran women. The consultation demonstrated the joint willingness of women to speak on behalf of



the voiceless and to champion the cause of the most poverty-stricken.

The topic "*Women and Proclamation*" was presented to the consultation by Dr. Anna Marie Aagaard, assistant professor of systematic theology at the University of Aarhus, Denmark. She began her lecture by quoting Julian of Norwich (14th century) ("*Revelations of Divine Love*", chapter 6) : "Because I am a woman should I therefore believe that I ought not to tell you about the goodness of God,.."?

Dr. Aagaard then went on to tell the significance of the story of Pentecost, which tells us of God's dreams about one people out of the many peoples, one people believing enough in God's Spirit to let God's dreams become reality. Pentecost means that men and women become seers of God's visions, they become a church.

Women are as much an integral part of this one people of God as are men. Dr. Aagaard called on the participants not to allow anyone to destroy their 'hope of one holy people, where also women are recognized as God's witnesses and let nobody destroy the love with which women also are called on to make the Kingdom real on earth. Let us take courage from each other and oppose all theology and all church structures which make us less than what we are : women loved enough by God to embody God's own visions.' It is important, said Dr. Aagaard, that we as individuals, but also as a church, start living the Gospel thereby making the Gospel trustworthy. For the Gospel must not only be true, but also trustworthy. She called on women 'to help each other to get rid of the inherited inferiority complexes and the lack of faith which lead us to consider others: the men, the powerful, the bishops and church-bureaucrats as being "more church" than we are.' Church structures

and other appearances might tell us otherwise but we have to know that we women belong to God's people and we are entrusted with a calling to proclaim and live as a community of love in spite of all obstacles. We have to know, that 'before being objects for development programmes, food distributions, and human rights-aid, before being objects for mission and evangelization, before somebody else does something for us we are subjects - women, loved by God and able to love.'

The fact that the participants of the consultation were willing and able to be witness of God's dreams was proven in a beautiful way in the morning devotions. Each day a different geographical unit was responsible for that event, and each day the morning devotion became a unique and unforgettable experience. The creativity demonstrated during those hours was overwhelming. Besides songs, prayers, scripture readings and homilies, we experienced dialogues, role plays, dances and many different symbolic actions, including a real footwashing ceremony. All this was a welcome change to the usual "hymn - prayer - scripture - reading - homily - prayer - hymn" syndrome.

Very important work was accomplished in the working groups which devoted their prime attention to defining the needs of women. It was recognized that any responsible planning for the future could only be accomplished on the basis of a careful analyses of women's needs. The deliberations took place in five issue groups, centering on :

1. Women and Education
2. Women and Rural Development
3. Women as Agents for Change
4. Women and Economic Development



## 5. Women and Population Education

The groups' reports made it obvious that the needs of women are manifold in all these areas and that concentrated efforts are necessary if one wants to solve some of the burning problems. Awareness-building and education for self-help appeared in all cases on top of the priority list. In the course of the deliberations it became clear that church-related women's organizations cannot continue with their traditional activities alone, but they must redefine their tasks in order to respond to the needs of women in their churches and societies.

Special attention was given to the situation of women in churches. It was amazing to see that despite the differences in cultural backgrounds of people the experience of women in churches is very similar. Generally women feel that they are kept outside the church structures and that their talents and potentials are not fully recognized. They feel that the churches are reluctant to spend money on the education of women for different levels of leadership. There is also little understanding for the refusal of churches to ordain women into the ministry. Women see that as a reluctance on the part of the churches to recognize the full humanity of women. It was felt that the proclamation of the Gospel is hindered by the churches' refusal to live the new community in Christ and by the lack of readiness to use the talents and potentials of women. The consultation participants wrote an open letter to the churches and formulated several recommendations aiming at improving their situation in the church. (See Exhibit I, p.7 f)

Much attention was also given to the question of ecumenical cooperation. Women recognized that for them it is often easier to cooperate ecumenically for they are less hindered by immobile structures.

Impatience was expressed with the slowness of the churches to build ecumenical relations and cooperation on the local, national and international levels. Women pledged themselves to show a better example by initiating ecumenical cooperation on the local level and by calling the LWF Women's Desk to cooperate in the establishing of an ecumenical liaison group among women's organizations which would enable them to coordinate activities on the international level.

Besides the internationally composed issue groups opportunity was given for participants from the same continent to gather in order to allow for discussion of their specific needs and for working out their own strategies.

The consultation in Sri Lanka also contributed greatly to the preparation of women delegates for the coming LWF Assembly. For most of the participants this event was the first international consultation they had attended and the experiences gained will hopefully facilitate their participation in Dar es Salaam.

All in all, the consultation in Sri Lanka was a week full of work, full of joy, full of sharing, caring, dreaming and hoping for a future where women and men will mutually recognize each other's dignity, where women and men will work in partnership for a just and peaceful society and where women and men will build a church which will be an expression of the new community in Christ. The Sri Lanka consultation was a step forward but made the participants aware that a great task still lies ahead of us all. They recognized that we have to use all our energy

to work towards our goal and that many prayers, much strength, support and solidarity will be needed if we want to be successful.

Let me conclude with a part of the closing litany of the consultation which was prepared for that event by Julie Stine, USA :

*Leader :* We recognize the tasks that lie ahead

*Response:* The times we will be singing

*Leader :* The times we will be crying,

*Response:* The moments we will seem to be alone,

*Leader :* But the other moments when we hold hands with a sister or brother,

*Response:* And feel you very near.

*Leader :* Give us courage to walk new roads,

*Response:* And give us the courage to sing new songs,

*Leader :* And give us the courage to dream new dreams,

*Response:* But show us the day

*Leader:* Or the hour

*Response:* Or the split-second of time

*Leader:* When that new road can be walked,

*Response:* When that new song can be sung,

*Leader:* When that new dream can be shaped into reality.

*Response:* We belong to you .

*Leader:* We belong to each other.

*Together:* We bring the gift of our lives to you and to each other, in the name of the Christ.

Amen

Éva Zabolai- Csekme

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## Recommendations

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### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### First recommendation :

The LWF International Consultation for Women, Sri Lanka, December 1976, had as a major focus women's social and economic status. As a consequence we recommend that the LWF Executive Committee :

1. implement just and creative hiring and employment practices and urge member churches to adopt similar practices.
2. intensify its efforts to alert church leaders about violation of human rights of women. This should include increased funding to create an additional staff position to be held by a woman executive in the area of human rights and international affairs.

#### Second recommendation :

The LWF International Consultation for Women meeting in Sri Lanka, December 1976, discussed matters related to the participation of women in the life and work of the church. It was strongly felt that special measures must be taken to ensure that questions related to the partnership between women and men be taken seriously and dealt with at the Assembly in Dar es Salaam. Therefore, the Consultation recommends, that the Executive Committee of the LWF take the necessary steps toward the establishment of a policy and reference sub-committee of the Assembly, which would deal specifically with questions related to the participation of women in the life and work of the churches.



## RECOMMENDATION TO THE ASSEMBLY

Because both women and men are called to become the heirs of God's Kingdom (cp. Cd. 1,15) 1.John 3:2,

Because both women and men constitute the church and have a common responsibility for its mission and service,

Because the dignity and special gifts of both women and men must be recognized,

The LWF International Women's Consultation, Sri Lanka, December 1976, calls upon the churches to let their structures and programs become true reflections of the new community in Christ between women and men by establishing special policy measures providing for adequate involvement of women and women's concerns in all policy making and in all programs.

We further call upon the churches to provide guidelines for inclusive language.

We call upon the churches to help create changed attitudes that will recognize women's dignity.

## RECOMMENDATION TO THE LWF AND ITS MEMBER CHURCHES

In recognition of ecumenical and bilateral dialogues and cooperative activities of denominations on different levels in the life of the churches, the LWF International Consultation for Women, Sri Lanka, December 1976, expresses appreciation for these efforts and urges their continuation.

We understand these efforts to be motivated by the command of the gospel to make visible the unity of the church so that the world may believe.

At the same time we are concerned by the fact that some churches emphasize their denominational and confessional identity at the expense of Christian unity and service. The trustworthiness of the church in proclaiming the gospel is at stake. The suffering world cries for the wholeness of the gospel expressed by the churches in united witness and service.

For too long, the initiatives of lay persons, especially women, in common witness and cooperation on the local level have been unrecognized.

We deplore this and call upon churches to recognize these initiatives and to ensure women full opportunity as equal partners with men to contribute to the ecumenical movement.

We pledge ourselves and call upon our churches to intensify their actions in ecumenical cooperations and in manifesting Christian unity.

(This recommendation was strongly supported by the ecumenical delegates present, who agreed to pass this recommendation on to their respective churches and/or organizations.)

## RECOMMENDATION TO COMMISSION ON WORLD SERVICE

The LWF International Consultation for Women, Sri Lanka, December 1976, discussed the impact of development projects on the lives of women.

Emanating from these discussions were the following recommendations to the Commission on World Service ,

- I. that all development projects of world service take into account their impact on women and that they be evaluated in accordance with the following :
  - a) Do women participate in the initiation and the Direction of the project ?
  - b) What are the benefits of this project for women ?
  - c) Does this project increase women's option ? What are the political, economic and cultural implications of this project with regard to women ?
  - d) Does it reinforce church and social structures that exclude women ?
- II. That literacy programs be intensified.
- III. That the Community Development Service make a lump sum available to be used for local projects requiring limited funds, e.g. pottery, small scale farming implements, marketing skills, etc.
- IV. That regional consultations on "Women and Rural Development" be initiated.
- V. That work for provision of pure water and sanitation be intensified, that special health care, hygiene, child care and nutrition programs for women be established.
- VI. That this recommendation be shared with cooperating donor agencies as well as churches initiating the projects.



### RECOMMENDATION TO COMMISSION ON CHURCH COOPERATION

The LWF International Consultation for Women, Sri Lanka, December 1976,

- a) devoted considerable time to the negative effects of bottle feeding. We request the Commission on Church Cooperation to alert all personnel of member churches with whom it cooperates regarding the problem of bottle feeding and the advantages of breast-feeding.
- b) reiterates the unanimous request from the Leadership Development Seminar held in Indonesia, October 24th to November 2nd, 1975, independently from the Hong Kong Lutheran Women's Fellowship Association, that a person be employed to carry out work with and among women in Asia (job description as seconded in the minutes from the second meeting of the LWF Advisory Committee on Women in the Church, January 1976.)
- c) strongly urges the Commission on Church Cooperation to provide for the employment of a person to work with and among women in Africa. The job description would be similar to the one for the person working as the Asia Women's Secretary.

### RECOMMENDATION TO THE COMMISSION ON STUDIES

- I. The LWF International Consultation for Women, Sri Lanka, December 1976, expresses its deep appreciation for the encouragement and work of the Commission and Director and Staff of the department in being advocate for women in the LWF and in the member churches.

We recommend that the Commission on Studies :

1. establish a Women's Desk within the Department of Studies and staff it with at least two full-time executive staff members.
2. fund the Women's Desk to meet the increased needs of women in member churches and to act responsibly in initiating programs that will assist women in developing to their fullest potential.
3. involve women in biblical and theological studies and urge the Executive Committee to involve women in the working groups responsible for carrying out bilateral dialogues and in the staff and board of the Strasbourg Institute.

- II. The LWF International Women's Consultation, Sri Lanka, December 1976, recommends that the Commission on Studies ask the Women's Desk to cooperate in a meeting of ecumenical and denominational women's organizations in order to explore the possibility of forming an International Ecumenical Liaison Group of Church Women's Organizations.



### MANDATE FOR WOMEN'S DESK

The LWF International Consultation for Women, Sri Lanka, December 1976, reaffirmed in principle the mandate for the women's desk as stated by the Båstad Consultation. Additional needs of women were identified as follows :

1. Training for professional leaders (staff) for women's organizations.
2. Consultative services to assist in designing programs and projects appropriate to regional and local needs.
3. Assistance in the education for responsible parenthood and a more equitable distribution of the world's resources.

### RECOMMENDATION TO COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION

The LWF International Consultation for Women, Sri Lanka, December 1976, noted the significant role communication plays in conveying the concerns of women and in building accurate images of women as they work out their participation in God's Mission.

The consultation participants, therefore, recommend that the Committee on communication :

1. intensify its efforts to communicate positive images of women which recognize their capabilities, insights and contribution.
2. communicate women's concerns as an integral part of the information that it distributes to the LWF and its member churches.
3. invite women to participate in training experiences on communication.
4. encourage the hiring of women in communication staff positions (including RVOG).
5. bring these concerns also to the attention of the World Association of Christian Communication.

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## A Letter to the Member Churches

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Grace and peace from God through Christ in the Holy Spirit.

We are writing to you on the 3rd Sunday of Advent, the Sunday of St. John the Baptist. He was a forerunner for the Kingdom of God and yet: the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.

All women and men who have been baptised into God's Kingdom are now the hands and the feet of this Kingdom on earth and called to recognize each other as people preparing the way of the Kingdom.

The LWF International Consultation for Women, Sri Lanka, December 1976, once more has made us women aware of our responsibility as Christians for the mission and service of the Church and the creation of one just world.

We want to share with you some of the concerns which emerged during our days together.

As Lutheran women we have renewed our commitment to education in the church. We believe that education is a continuing process aiming at the full potentials of each human being. Particularly we want to stress the need for education of the laity of the churches especially the women so that lay people become responsible church members involved in policy-making at all levels and able to assume leadership roles.

Many Lutheran churches have already made the ordination of women possible. Thereby they have responded to God's calling also women to become pastors and in the future bishops. We ask member churches not ordaining women to take necessary steps to do so. We ask you to review your employment policies especially those related to theological faculties and ask that you make provisions for educating and employing women as members of these faculties.

We are aware that a stronger emphasis on education of lay people and the realization of women's work as an integral part of the church's work require a reordering of budgetary priorities.

As we have listened and learned, we have become even more keenly aware of the plights and needs of our sisters in rural areas. We need to intensify efforts in rural development and especially focus on the impact of development programs on the lives of women. We urge you to evaluate each development project against the following four points:

- a) Do women participate in the initiation and the direction of these projects?
- b) What are the benefits of these projects for women?
- c) Does this project increase women's options? What are the political, economic and cultural implications of this project with regard to women?
- d) Do they reinforce church and social structures that exclude women?

We have heard also the cries of suffering from single parents, from single, widowed and divorced sisters telling us how neglected they feel in our churches. We plead that their dignity be affirmed and that their plights be met with increased efforts, to create a just society and a caring community.

As we have focussed on women's concerns, we are aware that these concerns are of importance also to men. We call upon you to gather both women and men for meetings and seminars that would deal with partnership.

In all our worship and in our service we make known to the world not only the triune God in whom we believe but also the images we have of one another as God's people.

May we together be instruments of God's grace on women and men.

May God's mercy and strength be with you.

The Participants of the  
International Consultation for Women  
of the Lutheran World Federation



## **Call to Participants and Women's Organizations of Member Churches**

The participants of the LWF International Consultation for Women, Sri Lanka, December 1976, committed themselves to be initiators to support one another and through their solidarity to advance as full partners in mission.

The Consultation therefore called upon the participants and the women's organization of their member churches to:

1. Encourage and assist women in their spiritual growth.
2. Provide opportunities for enabling women to be aware of their potential and to develop it to the fullest extent.
3. Conduct leadership development experience.
4. Work in cooperation with other Lutheran, other denominational women's organizations and other governmental and non-governmental agencies which share common goals for meeting the needs of people.
5. Act as agent of change to work toward wholeness in the church and a just and equitable society.
6. Establish literacy programs.
7. Educate women in understanding nutrition and its importance to human development at all ages.
8. Educate men and women for responsible parenthood.
9. Encourage the initiation of small-scale projects to benefit the women in their local area (handicraft, pottery, improvement of agriculture techniques, accounting and marketing, food preservation, etc.).
10. Implement just and creative hiring and employment practices in their own organization and urge their churches to adopt similar practices.

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## **Women and Worship — Rooted in the New Creation**

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In January 1975, at the meeting of the LWF Advisory Committee on Women in the Church, the issue of "Women and Worship" was identified as a key issue for the attention of the churches as part of the preparation for the next assembly of the LWF in Tanzania 1977. Since there is an increasing number of women in North America engaged in worship life of the church, lay and ordained, it was decided that this particular consultation ought to be in North America and a small working group was brought together for planning.

The working group noted an interesting phenomenon among women theologians. Due to their new experience in the ordained ministry, they are re-examining their understanding of ministry, especially as it relates to their roles in worship. They are reflecting on their genuine contribution to the understanding of ministry on the basis of their experiences as women.

Topics for the consultation were:

- Sign, Symbol and Image
- Liturgical Theology and Style
- Language: Inclusive Language and Language about God
- Hymnody: Music and Words
- The Baptized: Lay and Ordained
- Personal Spiritual Life and Public Prayer
- Scripture: Proclamation and Prophecy

The consultation took place at St. Benedict Center, Fox Bluff, Madison, Wisconsin, April 20th-23rd, 1977. It was sponsored by the US National Committee of the LWF and the LWF Women's Desk. The majority of the participants came from the United States and Canada, but there were also two participants from Africa, one from Asia, three from Europe and one from Latin America. The coordinators for the consultation were Ms. Vivian Nelson, ALC; and Rev. Constance Parvey, LCA.

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## LWF European Consultation for Women, Vienna/Austria, 1979

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When we 65 women from 15 European and two overseas countries gathered in Vienna, our aim was not to talk about our "role as mothers and grandmothers" but to discuss our initiatives and contributions toward the creation of just, equitable and peaceful societies and a renewed and united church. We recognized that for many centuries it was the man, the male who has defined reality, who has named his surroundings, who has set the social structures, who has developed the values of society and who has defined our own identity. This entire set-up was carefully guarded by the social institutions and sanctioned by theology and religious practices. We, however, understood that if we want to survive - and survive in dignity - we have to reshape our world, recreate our societies. The time has come for us women to rename reality, redefine our surroundings, revalue lost values and devalue those which triumphantly lead us into destruction and despair. This is not an easy task. Through our socialization we learned that our thoughts, feelings and actions are not as important as those of the male and we willingly gave away our power to others to be used as they saw it fit. Today we recognize that those values which society assigned to us as women, are important and that our leadership is necessary if we want to create a just, equitable and peaceful world.

In order to achieve that, however, we also need to rename ourselves. The meek, powerless mother earth needs to recognize her value and power. Instead of being the named, we have to become the naming; instead of the object, the subject; instead of the obeying assistants, critical co-creators. Instead of giving away our power, we have to use it for the benefit of humankind as a whole.

We need a new woman in order to create a new world and in order to shock our brothers into renaming themselves so that out of the loneliness of oppression and the loneliness of dominion we can join together for a partnership which is the prerequisite for a responsible dominion over the earth.



When we discussed the rising consciousness of women and its significance for

- a) our Europe of tomorrow
- b) reconciliation and peace
- c) theology and the renewal of the church

we were aware of the fact that we are part of a movement which has the potential to alter the future of humankind in a significant way. There were several basic revolutions throughout history which changed human beings' perception of others and of themselves. Today we witness the revolution of human dignity as it is expressed in the anti-apartheid, anti-colonial, anti-racist, feminist and other movements. All of them are related, for all of them are engaged in the affirmation of human worth and human dignity. Yet it is the women's movements which has the potential to be of the greatest significance, for it challenges those attitudes and relationships which are most basic to human beings all over the world. By challenging female-male relationships as manifested by the patriarchal family, the women's movement also challenges the hierarchical institutions which were modelled after it. More than that, women challenge the existing value systems according to which those values which are socialized into males also dominate society as a whole.

In a world where technological and economic progress creates manifold unexpected problems and possibilities, where a mindless arms-race controlled by only a few threatens to destroy all, where the world's goods increasingly benefit a decreasing percentage of the world's population, there is time for us women - half of humankind - to create viable alternatives to the existing situation. It is time for us to break the barriers which limit our imagination, which encage our creativity and which do not even allow us to envisage a different future.

In discussing the "future Europe in which we would like to live", we tried to do exactly that, namely to dream of a continent in which justice, quality and peace would prevail, in which the diversities would be respected and which would not base its wealth on the exploitation of other nations. In formulating steps toward that goal, we recognized that our contribution as women could be extremely significant, if we just learned to use the power we have in a positive way. It is clear that there is a long way to go in study, reflection, building of consciousness and of solidarity before we can make the desired significant contribution. We pray for courage to dream of new possibilities, wisdom to formulate the first steps toward putting them into practice and strength to carry those steps through even if this task is more difficult than envisaged.



## Statements

1.

### STATEMENT OF THE LWF EUROPEAN CONSULTATION FOR WOMEN, VIENNA, JUNE 6TH-12TH, 1979

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The European Women's Consultation of the LWF in Vienna, June 1979, would like to draw the attention of the member churches to a few theological aspects which, from a Lutheran point of view, are important for the position of women in the church.

First we would like to emphasize that, according to the theology of creation, man and woman are created equal and equitable. They were given the joint mandate to beget children and to care for them, as well as to be responsible stewards of nature and creation (Gen.

1:26-28).. This means that both sexes have the capacity and opportunity to fulfill both aspects of this mandate of God. In the current discussion about the roles of men and women this means that the complete life fulfilment of the woman does not only lie in her role as a mother, but that she is also called to accept tasks and challenges in society. A man's duties are not only oriented towards outside society, but as a father he has commitments to his children and his home, which unfortunately have not been appropriately recognized by most men in our churches. The churches have supported family and social structures which determine the tasks and the distribution of work according to sex and not according to individual abilities and possibilities. That has contributed to a narrowing of the role of the woman as well as limiting the role of the father in the family. Therefore, we refer to the story of Creation as an impetus to liberation from limiting patterns of behaviour of men and women, as an impetus to liberation to equal and equitable partnership of men and women in society, in the family and in the church.

Secondly, it must be pointed out in our churches that Jesus did not support and affirm the patriarchal system of his time, but that he broke away from it. In his encounters with women Jesus always treated them as equals, and he always stood up for the rights of women, e.g. in questions of marriage and divorce. The radical position Jesus took on the status of women should induce the churches of today to advocate the equality of women.



Thirdly, on the basis of the universality of the redemption by Christ, men and women are to be equal and equitable members of the church. Baptism eliminates all social barriers between human beings (Gal. 3:28). We would like to point to Luther's emphasis of the fact that all baptized Christians share in the universal priesthood of believers. In the church there is only one estate, and all human beings are equal. Men and women share equally in the mandate of the church. Both have received the Holy Spirit and the gifts of mercy to be applied in the service of the gospel and in the service of humans. For us this means liberty to organize the functions of the church in such a way that the capacities and abilities of individuals can be better used in the service of the gospel and for the love of one's neighbour. It also means that the different tasks within the church are not distributed according to sex. The ideals of service and sacrifice have been preached primarily to the women of our churches. But Jesus preached these ideals to his disciples. Today, they need to be emphasized to the men in order to change the imbalanced power relations between men and women into an equal partnership, in which both serve their neighbours as free and independent individuals. The church should be the place where the new human being becomes a reality in community with God.

2.

## STATEMENT

During the LWF European Conference for Women, meeting in Vienna / Austria, 6 - 12 June 1979, we, as delegates of LWF member churches, discussed the future of our continent and our role as women in shaping that future. Representing eastern and western, northern and southern Europe, we express our hope for a Europe in which the plurality and diversity of nations, social systems, religions and ideologies is recognized and basic human rights are respected. We further express our commitment to work with all our power toward achieving lasting peace. Recognizing the fact that peace does not only mean the absence of war, but rather justice, equality, happiness and well-being for all, we call our nations and churches to engage actively in peace building by eliminating conditions which lead to injustice and inequality.

We further recognize that in our global world we cannot build our wealth and our happiness on the exploitation and misery of others. We therefore seek ways to build a Europe in which nations exist in true partnership with nations of other continents without misusing or exploiting them.

Noting the connections between private and public values and structures, we have begun to understand that a new community between women and men is a prerequisite for a just and equitable society and for lasting peace. We therefore commit ourselves to increase our efforts to conscientize both women and men, helping them to gain a new understanding of their roles and responsibilities both in the private and public spheres.



## Recommendations

### 3. RECOMMENDATION TO THE LWF CONCERNING WOMEN IN LEADING POSITIONS

We affirm and are grateful to God for the important strides made by the Lutheran World Federation Sixth Assembly in emphasizing the need of LWF structures and programs to reflect the partnership of women and men in the new community in Christ. This partnership must be strengthened and expanded as the Federation seeks to use the special gifts of lay and clergy, women and men of all ages in decision-making and program-building.

In anticipation of the Seventh LWF Assembly we recommend:

1. that the delegations of member churches be comprised of adequate representation of women and men, both lay and clergy as well as youth, thus reflecting the inclusiveness of every church constituency.
2. that at least one third of the delegates be women as a step towards truly reflecting the equality of women and men in the member churches.
3. that these women be included in all categories: lay, clergy, and youth.
4. that member churches be requested to elect their delegations at least two years before the next assembly to assure appropriate preparation and orientation, including the opportunity for delegates, particularly women who have had no experience at international meetings, to have such experiences.

Further,

5. that a goal similar to 2) above be established for the Executive Committee, the officers, the Commissions and staff, namely that at least one third of the members of these committees, the officers and staff be women.

4.

## TO THE LWF

We ask the LWF and particularly its Community Development Service to scrutinize its own study and development projects with the criteria of furthering equality of women and men in church and society. As a step in this direction, we support the recommendation to the LWF Department of Church Cooperation that there be an ecumenical consultation of female and male Commission members engaged in decisions concerning development projects on the subject of how such development projects further or hinder the economic opportunities and independence of women.

5.

## TO THE LWF AND ITS MEMBER CHURCHES

The LWF European Consultation for Women in Vienna recommends to the LWF and its member churches that in their entire sphere of work contact, mutual exchange and cooperation with bodies such as CEC and WCC be emphasized. This should be undertaken on all levels. Since ecumenical cooperation is mostly limited to the level of church boards and prominent representatives, we request that ecumenical contacts on the local level be strengthened. We believe that in such mutual exchange the Lutheran identity will be maintained and that isolation of churches will be avoided.



6.

# TO THE LWF, THE LWF DEPARTMENT OF STUDIES/COMMISSION ON STUDIES, AND THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES

The New Testament emphasizes woman's ability and full responsibility for proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ. For this reason, the church deprives itself of a part of its God-given wealth, if it refuses to make full use of these abilities. By working together, men and women have discovered new aspects of faith and of living together.

Nevertheless, it still happens that women because they are women, are subject to offence and discrimination in their churches. This occurs in particular when women are denied ordination or when, in spite of ordination, are not granted the same rights.

We request the LWF to work towards female theologians being ordained and admitted to the full pastoral office in the same way as male theologians. Ordination and the resulting possibilities for work in the church must be independent of the family situation of the female theologian.

We suggest furthermore to carry out studies and comparisons :

- on the churches' experiences with ordained women in all areas of service, and the female theologians' own experiences in the service of the church on the international level;
- on the working conditions of women and men theologians and differences in individual legal provisions;
- on the ways how clearly to encourage young women to study theology and grant them adequate career possibilities, moreover to hire and employ a sufficient number of women for work in theological research and teaching;
- on the ways how to give female students and theologians the opportunity for ecumenical and international experience by means of scholarship and exchange.

## 7. TO THE LWF

As women, in much of our contact with pastoral counseling, we have experienced a lack of understanding of who we are as female persons, of the real situation in which we live today, the new reflections we have about ourselves and the new challenges we face in private and public life, in church, society and family.

We therefore recommend to the LWF that a consultation be held to explore these issues in depth. The consultation would include experienced people in the psychological field and in family counseling with equal participation of women and men. A report and recommendations should be directed toward the enhancement of theological and practical training with regard to the pastoral concerns and needs of women, and toward the development of new reflections on roles of women and men in the ministry.



8.  
RECOMMENDATION TO THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION AND WORLD  
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES CONCERNING EDUCATION FOR PEACE

We request the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches to encourage all member churches in their efforts to provide active education for peace and to convince their respective governments of the need for taking concrete measures to this effect.

- Worldwide seminars should be organized in which parents and guardians of children and adolescents can learn how to provide active education for peace.
- The results of the work done in such seminars should be published and distributed in order to stimulate work in community groups.
- At all levels of community life, children and adolescents should receive training in peace-promoting activities and communication.
- Efforts should be made to enlist the support of the mass media. They should be convinced that through their great influence on personal attitudes they have a very important role to play in promoting peace.
- Community groups should take an active part in identifying cases of discrimination, the propagation of enemy images and other stereotypes and prejudices, and should combat these.
- Churches should make every effort to persuade governments of all countries to establish a constructive alternative to military conscription, such as civilian service.

9.  
TO THE LWF DEPARTMENT OF STUDIES

In the light of our theological discussion at the LWF European Consultation for Women and the many issues raised here, we recommend a study project on female images in our theological language related to God and to people, on a new anthropology and on female symbols and the role of women in the Bible. We recommend that this study project be undertaken in cooperation with the WCC Study "Community of Women and Men in the Church".

We further recommend that a report of this study be made to the LWF member churches and that it be brought to the LWF Assembly as a major issue.

10.

## RECOMMENDATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STUDIES

International consultations for representatives of LWF member churches significantly expand the understanding of missions and reaffirm the solidarity Christians must show in witness and service in all parts of the world. The LWF International Consultation for Women in Sri Lanka deepened such understanding and solidarity as Lutheran women met for the first time on the world level. We, the participants at the 1979 European Consultation in Vienna, express appreciation for that consultation and call upon the Lutheran World Federation, Department of Studies, to sponsor a similar event in 1983.

11.

## TO THE LWF WOMEN'S DESK

Because many of our Lutheran churches have a longer experience with ordained women, and because little documentation about their experiences exists, we request the LWF to organize a European consultation for Lutheran women pastors and theologically trained women who are doing pastoral work within the church.

It is further requested that this consultation include representatives from CEC and WCC. It is hoped that a major documentation will emerge from this consultation which focuses on the experiences of women pastors in the Lutheran Church, thus making an important contribution to the ecumenical discussion on this issue.

## 12. RECOMMENDATION TO THE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENTS OF THE LWF, WCC AND THEIR MEMBER CHURCHES

The LWF Sixth Assembly in Dar es Salaam had as its theme "In Christ a New Community". It is necessary that this new community of women and men be made visible in the public presentation of the church. That means:

- 1) that the public relations organs of the church give women in responsible positions the opportunity to express their views, thus giving a more accurate and comprehensive image of women.
- 2) that more professional and voluntary women workers be invited by the information agencies of the church to further their education in communications.
- 3) that more women be educated in the language of the media and in the effective presentation of women's issues in the public sphere.
- 4) that preference be given by the member churches and the LWF in awarding scholarships to women for education in the mass media.



13.

# RECOMMENDATION TO THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION MEMBER CHURCHES CONCERNING PEACE AND DISARMAMENT

For several years the question of abortion has been a vital issue for the churches. We appreciate their concern for protecting the rights of the unborn child. Now we call upon our Lutheran churches to show a similar concern for the protection of lives threatened by the arms race and by growing militarism.

1. We call upon the churches to take initiatives to ensure that theological studies deal with the ethical implications of the world situation today and particularly the so-called over-kill capacity of weapons. We should rethink our understanding of "a just war" in the light of the possibility of a nuclear catastrophe. We must work toward the termination of the military industry and research which lead to the arms race with its enormous waste of human and economic resources on a worldwide scale.
2. We call upon the churches to urge politicians and researchers to do their utmost for disarmament by creating an atmosphere of openness and trust in which concrete disarmament actions can take place.
3. There is a great need for information about efforts in the field of peace and disarmament on the grass-roots level. We ask the member churches to engage in concrete actions and to prepare study material on peace and disarmament for the congregations, including women's groups. Such actions could be related to the International Disarmament Week in October 1979.
4. Furthermore we urge member churches to encourage investigation of companies involved in military industry and research, to investigate the relationships of disarmament and possibilities for development and to encourage research on how the military industry can be turned into industries which benefit humankind.
5. Women have in the past been engaged in peace activities in their own organisations, but have rarely been represented on the official level. We ask the churches to include at least 40% women in peace delegations and conferences and in other peace-relevant work taking place between eastern and western Europe.



#### 14. RECOMMENDATION TO LWF MEMBER CHURCHES CONCERNING WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS

The credibility of the church requires that the proclamation of creation and redemption be demonstrated in all areas of its life and work. In the scriptures we read that God created humankind in his image, male and female. This means an equal relationship between men and women.

Today, women are becoming more aware of their marginal status in the church. Individual women of equivalent competence are frequently not represented equally with men at policy-making levels. Many women's organizations have little power in the determination of church policy and church teachings and decision-making in finance, ecumenical relations, worship and other areas.

We therefore recommend

1. that member churches and all their structures affirm and work toward the co-responsibility of women and men in all positions of leadership, and especially in the areas of ecumenical relations, worship, theological education and finances.
2. that member churches including their women's organizations and women's groups provide leadership training and continuing education to enable women to participate equally and mutually with men in all of these positions.

#### 15. TO THE LWF AND ITS MEMBER CHURCHES

The most essential task of the church and the congregation is to communicate the gospel. Lay people - men and women - have a special task therein, namely to make the gospel visible through words and deeds in all spheres of life. This is in accordance with the teaching of Martin Luther regarding the priesthood of all believers. Lay people should be made aware of and acquainted with this task through special educational measures.

Lay and clergy should work together in partnership regarding this issue, contributing their special talents and knowledge.

We ask the member churches to exchange their experiences in lay training, to search for imaginative new ways, and to encourage and prepare lay people for ministry in the congregation.

Due to the importance of this task especially in the situation of today, we consider it important that the LWF play an encouraging role and that it continue to give financial support to such undertakings, especially to minority churches.

16.  
TO THE MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE LWF WITH THE REQUEST OF  
DISTRIBUTION TO THE CONGREGATIONS

We, the participants at the LWF European Consultation for Women, expect the church to take seriously the message of liberation that Jesus represents also for women.

We would like to see that the new attitude concerning the equality of man and woman in all spheres of the church become a viable model.

As the changed life-style creates insecurity for many, we request assistance in the following areas:-

- a. family, marriage, education of children
- b. living alone
- c. elimination of hierarchical structures
- d. theological interpretations
- e. education and working conditions for church workers
- f. proclamation

To make living and working together in partnership possible, both women and men need supportive help in the form of:

consultations, group discussions, study projects,  
scholarships, financial support for information material.

17.  
RECOMMENDATION TO THE MEMBER CHURCHES

Our church is not credible if the proclamation of creation and redemption is not expressed in the life and work of the church. In the creation story it is said: "God created human beings in his image, male and female he created them" (this is also the year's motto of the Herrnhuter Brüdergemeinde).

For this reason we appeal to the synods and leadership of all member churches to ensure equal representation of women in all fields of work and leadership positions of their churches. By this we mean that women share responsibility, not only with regard to women's work, but also in other areas such as ecumenism, worship, finances, etc.



18.

## TO THE LWF AND ITS MEMBER CHURCHES

In the conversations during our European Consultation for Women, with approx. 20% participation from Eastern European countries, we became aware of the necessity of exchange of experiences between delegates from different social systems. We hope that such exchanges will continue to be possible in the future. We recommend that when European questions concerning church and society in East and West are considered, they be considered jointly because we belong together.

We also expect that all future consultations of the LWF will have a far greater participation of women delegates than is presently the case.

19.

## TO THE MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE LWF

The delegates of the first LWF European Consultation for Women in Vienna, June 6-12th, 1979, ask to communicate the following recommendation to the LWF member churches:

The employment of men and women makes it necessary to fully recognize, apart from one's professional occupation, the work carried out at home and for the benefit of the family. Society depends on such work and on unpaid work performed in church and in other fields. Since there will always be work to be done without payment, a just distribution between men and women should be aimed at.

Moreover, since the double workload of women caused by their occupational and family duties often leads to crises, it is absolutely necessary to create better opportunities for part-time work for both men and women.

20.

## RECOMMENDATION TO THE CHURCHES

The LWF European Consultation for Women in Vienna, June 6-12, 1979, urges the churches to become advocates for the rights of migrant workers and for people from other countries, to deal with the root causes of migration and to give particular attention to the problems of the dependants of migrant workers, their wives and children.

We also urge local congregations to provide education about other cultures and religions in order to combat racism and prejudices.



21.

## TO THE LUTHERAN WOMEN

Dear Sisters!

When we are told in the Old and New Testaments that we were created as men and women and that we are equal before God, this is not only meant as a promise but as a particular responsibility to the world and to our church.

It is not enough merely to complain that we are denied the equal rights due to us as women, if we are not at the same time prepared to participate in the work and the decision-making processes in our churches. Moreover, we need to educate ourselves for the participation in responsibility and demand that leadership training be offered to us.

22.

## ECUMENICAL CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN WOMEN

We thank God that a forum for European Christian women is being organized. This forum, the Ecumenical Conference of European Christian Women (ECECW) manifests unity in Jesus Christ which transcends cultural, linguistic, national and confessional differences. It aims to help women find a common identity in Christ, to deepen their Christian understanding, and to work for the unity of the church and humankind.

We express our solidarity with the ECECW and call upon:

- a) our respective churches to support this new forum for women by informing all church members of its activities,
- and
- b) our women's organizations and interested individuals to become active members through representation and financial support.

23.

## TO THE UN CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

We, the participants of the LWF European Consultation for Women in Vienna, June 6 - 12, 1979, focused our attention on the meaning of the rising consciousness of women for our Europe of tomorrow. In our discussions it soon became evident that the issue of disarmament and peace constituted one of the major elements of our concern. We committed ourselves to do our utmost to create just, equitable and peaceful societies. As a consequence we call upon the UN Conference on Science and Technology for Development to urge politicians and researchers to do their utmost for the process of disarmament, as we see that the present arms race is leading to an enormous waste of human and economic resources on a worldwide scale.

Furthermore we urge UNCSTD to investigate the relationship between disarmament and possibilities for development, and to encourage research on how the military industry can be turned into industries which benefit humankind, e.g. alternative appropriate technology.

# lwf all africa consultation for women

**gaborone/botswana  
march 1980**

Gaborone, Botswana, became the site of a historic event from March 2nd to 9th, 1980. For the first time, Lutheran women from all parts of Africa met to discuss their needs and to make recommendations to their churches and to international bodies concerning burning issues. The presence of a number of women from other denominations underlined the recognition that the problems of women cannot be solved in isolation, but only in cooperation with others struggling with the same problems.

Organized by the Lutheran World Federation, this first All Africa Consultation for women had as its main theme "The African Woman's Quest for a New Order". The choice of this theme expressed the recognition that the problems of African women must be dealt with in the national and global contexts, and also that the much desired new national and international orders cannot be formulated and implemented effectively unless the participation of women is recognized as a key issue.

When discussing the three main topics "Women in Development", "Women in Politics and Law" and "Women in Theology and Church Structures", the participants demonstrated that their concern is not only the welfare of women in a narrow sense, but the participation of women in the building of a better future for humankind, including - of course - a more humane future for women.

The presence of outstanding women leaders of Africa as speakers ensured a high level of discussion and a broad overall vision. Madame Rahantavololona R. Andriamanjato from Madagascar, a well-known public figure both on the national and international scenes, a member of the ministerial cabinet for Post and Telecommunication and a member of the Popular Council of the Antananarivo province, who for 17 years has been responsible for the water supply of all cities of her country, a lecturer at the University of Madagascar and who also serves as expert, consultant or board member to several international organizations including the WHO, the WCC and the Women's International Democratic Federation, spoke on the subject of Women in Development. Another speaker on the same topic, but concentrating on the New International Economic Order, development and the arms race, and development and the energy crisis, was Madame Lily A. W. Monze from Zambia. She is Political Secretary for the Economic and Finance Sub-Committee of the Central Committee of the United National Independence Party of Zambia, former Minister of State for Economic and Technical Cooperation and Planning, and, like Mme Andriamanjato, a key person in many national and international organizations.



They emphasized that the search of women for a new conceptual framework for development requires increased attention to issues such as national independence, the New International Economic Order, the arms race and energy crisis as well as the need for appropriate technology for rural and urban women. Madame Andriamanjato stressed the need for women to enter the scientific fields to ensure that science and technology will serve to improve the quality of life for humankind as a whole. She further pointed to the fact that all human resources are needed in order to establish the desired new order and that women have to challenge social customs and attitudes which minimize their confidence and prevent them from creative participation in the shaping of their societies.

Madame Monze devoted much attention to the internal components of the NIEO, to the necessity for increased technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), to agrarian reform and rural transformation and to the role of women in achieving these aims. She emphasized that the ending of the arms race and the use of existing resources for human development is a prerequisite for the implementation of a new world order. She encouraged African women to participate actively in the development of alternative energy sources, i.e. safe, clean, inexpensive and renewable local sources, such as sun, wind and water.

No doubt was left about the fact that the church is as badly in need of a new order as society in general. Madame Daisy U.N. Obi from Nigeria, Director of the Institute of Church and Society/Christian Council of Nigeria in Ibadan, a theologian who also holds degrees in trade unionism and international relations as well as in French, was the lecturer on "Women in Theology and Church Structures". She noted that the education of African women still suffers from the colonial heritage which exported the European middle-class ideas of women as inferior beings, "lacking an active and independent will" and which restricted the educational choice of women to the so-called "soft" disciplines, such as teaching, nursing and social work. Nowhere, however, is the breakthrough as slow as in the church due to "the cultural indoctrination of maleness and sacredness attached to the study and worship of (one) God". Madame Obi called for serious reexamination of our interpretations of biblical texts which condition the attitude of the church toward women, and she emphasized the necessity for women's ordination. She further encouraged African women to engage in research on the role of women in traditional African religions as a contribution toward the indigenization of Christianity.

Madame Annie R. Jiaage, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Ghana, president emeritus of the International Federation of Women Lawyers, one of the Presidents of the WCC, and member of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, recalled the struggle for national independence in her country in her paper "Women in Politics and Law". She noted that exploitation is only possible as long as people are satisfied with their lot or unaware of their own power. In drawing a parallel between the national liberation struggle and

the situation of women, she encouraged women to recognize their own potential and to dare to participate in the decision-making processes, for only with their participation can real change be expected. Stating that "justice is one and indivisible" she called on women to fight all discrimination, be it based on race, sex, nationality, religion or social class, and to work for justice in family, church and society.

A large part of the available time was spent in groups which, in addition to identifying the needs and priorities of African women in family, education, employment, development, theology and church structures, and human rights, discussed the following topics:

- 1) Women and development, especially as this topic relates to rural and urban problems, small technology and the advantages and disadvantages of development programmes for women.
- 2) The New International Economic Order and the contribution of women toward achieving that goal.
- 3) The relationship between development and the arms race as well as between development and the energy crisis; further, the role of women in the promotion of peace and the search for viable solutions to problems posed by the energy crisis.
- 4) Human rights questions, such as apartheid, as well as the role of women in African liberation movements and the impact of liberation movements on the status of women in African societies.
- 5) Women's legal rights questions, especially as they relate to the following areas
  - a) marriage and divorce
  - b) inheritance
  - c) education and employment
  - d) customs and traditions
- 6) Present state of theological education for women and that of Christian education of lay people, especially women, with special attention to the question of the ordination of women into the ministry.
- 7) The participation of women in the leadership of the church, the root causes of discrimination of women in the church and ways to work toward a renewed partnership between women and men in the decision-making bodies of the church.
- 8) The possibility of theological study/research in Africa as it relates to reexamination of biblical interpretations concerning the status of women and as it relates to the role of women in African religions.

The reports and recommendations emerging from these groups call, among other things, for equal access to education and increased employment opportunities for women, for the recognition of the value of women's work in the home and in the economy, adequate day-care facilities at the place of employment and



civic education for women, enabling them to participate in the decision-making processes at all levels. The participants further called on the churches to discuss, advocate and implement responsible and equitable male-female relationships, to give women scholarships for theological studies and to accept them into the ordained ministry, to reexamine theological anthropology and to correct misinterpretations of biblical texts concerning women, as well as to include women in the decision-making processes of the church on all levels. They further recommended that the churches revise the content and method of Sunday school education as well as the training of Sunday school teachers. The participants devoted much attention to Christian training of lay women.

Concerning the New International Economic Order, the group concentrated on the internal components, such as education, health, food and hunger, shelter as well as employment and they discussed the equitable distribution of resources on the global, regional, national and family levels. They deplored the arms race and recommended counter-measures and special actions by women. In discussing the energy crisis, African women aimed at energy independence through the use of alternative energy sources.

Concerning women in politics and law, the participants called everybody to fight any kind of discrimination, be it based on race, sex, religion, nationality or social class. They demanded equal opportunities for women in education, training and employment as well as adequate maternity leave with full pay. They also called on the churches to pay attention to problems of women in connection with marriage and divorce.

The experience of this consultation revealed the immense complexity of tasks to be accomplished in order to arrive at the much-desired new order for humankind. It also helped the participants recognize that women as individuals and as an organized group have to acquire a new identity to be able to make a relevant contribution. The activities of church-related women's groups will have to be seriously reexamined as to their relevancy in the present situation and as to their contribution to the establishment of a new order. Women's groups will have to pay increased attention to such items as civic education of women, the New International Economic Order and its external and internal components, the improvement of women's legal rights and the conscientization of women so that they can become active agents of change.

There is a long road ahead with study, reflection and action before the presence of women can really make a difference in the shaping of our societies and in the formation of our future. This consultation, however, revealed that women are ready to walk this long and hard road in hope, prayer, perceptiveness and solidarity.

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## recommendations

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE WCC, AACC, LWF AND MEMBER CHURCHES

We, the participants of the LWF All-Africa Consultation for Women meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, discussed, among other things, women in theology and church structures.

We noted that when Christianity came to Africa, there existed already traditional religions in which women play prominent roles as priestesses and diviners, but when Christianity was introduced, the early missionaries did not spend time studying the already existing structures of the traditional religions which could have assisted in promoting women's leadership in the life of the church. The early missionaries' interpretation of the Pauline teachings concerning women, which were contextually oriented, were applied too literally to the African setting.

In view of this, we strongly recommend :

1. that research on the role of women in the African Traditional Religion (ATR) be undertaken and that women should be included in that research.
2. that women be included in the existing LWF Regional Research and Study Teams in Africa.
3. that women be encouraged to study theology and be given priority when scholarships are allocated.
4. that churches accept ordination of women forthwith, particularly as women are gifted in pastoral care by virtue of their role as mothers.
5. that the church strive to improve the salaries and working conditions of pastors (ordained ministry) wherever possible in order to give incentives to both women and men to enter the ordained ministry.
6. that church women's organizations be encouraged to co-operate with other women's organizations in all fields that improve the quality of life.
7. that women's organizations within the structure of the church encourage women and young girls to undertake theological training in order to assume leadership within the church structures and Christian organizations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE WCC, AACC, LWF AND MEMBER CHURCHES

During the LWF All-Africa Conference for Women meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, we, the participants discussed, among other items, the importance of emphasizing Christian education in the church and at all levels of learning from kindergarten to university.

Religious education is provided for in most African countries in the school curriculum. However, the approach used in the past in teaching it was not quite successful. We understand that churches in Tanzania and Liberia are experimenting with a different approach. It would therefore be helpful if such information could be shared with others.

The youth in schools (high schools and colleges) need a lot of help and strengthening in their Christian faith to be able to face the challenges of life contradictory to their beliefs as Christians, e.g. the concept of evolution and atheism.

In view of the above discussion we recommend :

1. that Sunday school committees be formed to work hand in hand with the pastors in planning programmes which should include seminars for volunteer teachers.
2. that churches encourage parents to take special interest in teaching their children at home as well as in Sunday school.
3. that Sunday school materials, including audio-visual aids, be developed and produced by the local churches in their own context.
4. that youth interested in and committed to Christian activities be trained as leaders and given certificates.
5. that where there is no possibility of conducting formal religious instruction the church prepare appropriate religious literature including the use of other media, e.g. cassettes, cinema, seminars and camps which could be used by the youth individually or in groups.
6. that in all situations volunteers in Christian education be encouraged in their work and be assisted to improve their skills.



## TO LWF MEMBER CHURCHES AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

We, the participants of the LWF All-Africa Conference for Women meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, discussed issues concerning human rights.

We affirmed that there are certain inalienable human rights such as the right to life, equal education opportunities, choice of religion, equal pay for equal work, the right to choose where to live and the right to choose whom to marry.

In view of our discussions we recommend :

1. that governments and financing companies be urged to grant women loans for buying and building houses on an equal basis with men.
2. that the employer sector of society be conscientized to the fact that sexual favours are not part of the employment contract and that, at the same time, women be encouraged not to submit to such demands and/or favours.
3. that women be made aware of their rights regarding employment, e.g.
  - a) leave conditions
  - b) employment security
  - c) taxes
  - d) wages and increments
  - e) pensions and gratuities
4. that the employment of women on the same terms as men be advocated and employers be urged to grant maternity leave of at least three months with full pay.
5. that employers be urged to provide adequate day-care facilities at the places of employment.
6. that women be encouraged to stand for public office at all levels of government and that women's groups take an active part in nominating and supporting women.
7. that ECA and OAU programmes be fully supported and the formation of national machineries, women's ministries, councils and bureaux be encouraged.

8. that provision of better facilities in rural areas be advocated in order to overcome the rural exodus and that women be encouraged to take advantage of urban industrial programmes where they exist.
9. that research be carried out on the working woman's burden and her economic contribution with a view to establishing a better division of labour at all levels, including the family.

#### TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

We, the participants of the LWF All-Africa Conference for Women meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, discussed questions related to women and development. On the basis of our discussions we recommend :

1. that increased efforts be made to transfer capital resources on favourable terms from the developed to the developing nations, i.e. the target of transferring 0.7 per cent of the GNP from developed to developing countries should be attained.
2. that efforts be made to avoid the brain drain from developing to developed countries by urging the governments to facilitate appropriate equipment and training as well as adequate reward (wages) for all skilled jobs in countries of origin.
3. that more favourable terms of trade and fairer prices for raw materials from developing countries be negotiated.
4. that better programmes for women be developed and the dialogue between women from developing and developed countries be strengthened.
5. that the participation of women in international debates at the United Nations be increased.



## RECOMMENDATIONS TO FAO, WHO, UNESCO, USAID, OAU, LWF AND GOVERNMENTS OF ALL AFRICAN COUNTRIES

During the LWF All-Africa Consultation for Women meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, we, the participants discussed, among other items, health and nutrition.

Health is wealth. People can only contribute their best to the development of their countries economically, socially, and politically when in good health. We also recognize the fact that malnutrition is a treat to humanity - in particular to infants, who are the leaders of tomorrow.

We therefore recommend :

1. that services be provided for simple methods of purification of water, e.g. use of the hibiscus flower for purification of water as it is being investigated in India.
2. that increased provision be made for comprehensive measures in health education and services (including the preparation and preservation of food), sanitation, nutrition, family education, family planning and other welfare services.
3. that village projects also be encouraged, e.g. building wells to serve the village or water pipes on a communal basis wherever it is possible.
4. that people have free or cheaper medical services. Medical centres should be increased to reach the remotest rural areas. Training of doctors and nurses and adequate supplies of medicines should be provided.
5. that the role of MCH (mother and child health) services be publicized and that more public health clinics be provided for in order to decrease the high infant mortality rate.
6. that public health be improved and the primary health approach as well as preventive measures be encouraged and that more attention be given to sanitation.
7. that research into traditional medicines be encouraged. The traditional midwives should be encouraged to use more hygienic methods and conditions. The consequences of lack of knowledge about how to deal with risk cases demand periodic training and updating of the knowledge of traditional midwives.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNITED NATIONS, OAU, LWF

We, the participants of the LWF All-Africa Conference for Women in Gaborone, March 2 - 9, 1980, discussed the arms race.

There is an urgent task before us to stop the arms race, to work for détente and to come up with effective global measures for disarmament. Peace is vital to the achievement of these aims. As Helvi Sipilä, UN Assistant Secretary General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, has said in her appeal, "How the Arms Race Harms Women", a paper prepared for a women's seminar on Women and World Disarmament (1978), women are to take a more positive step "against the wasteful use of national wealth for the arms race and the use of these funds for the improvement of the situation of human beings".

We therefore recommend :

1. that the progressive international world thwart the profit motive of transnational corporations which trade arms.
2. that there be a better proportion between the military and civil sectors of the economy, thereby arresting the rising inflation.
3. that the manufacturers of toy weapons be stopped since they create in the minds of children the urge to go into battle as the only source of defence. We must strive for peace within ourselves, in our homes, our communities and eventually within the international community.

Furthermore :

We condemn the potential to develop nuclear weapons in South Africa.

We welcome the establishment of a government of majority rule in Zimbabwe and call for a quick solution to the Namibian and South African situations.



## RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNESCO, UNICEF, FAO, OAU AND ALL GOVERNMENTS IN AFRICA AND TO THE LWF

We, the participants of the LWF All-Africa Conference for Women, meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, discussed, among other items, women in development, and recognized the difficulties and the drudgery that women still have to endure throughout Africa. We define development as the means of improving the quality of life for women through personal, political and social growth and economic improvement, while retaining what is best in their culture.

We recommend :

1. that the United Nations and its specialized agencies, e.g. UNESCO and UNICEF, endeavour to increase the facilities for equal access to primary and higher education, and that African governments be persuaded to provide free and compulsory primary education and to train personnel for pre-school education.
2. that equal opportunities for technical and vocational training for boys and girls be provided.
3. that civic education for women's groups be provided so that women can fully participate in decision-making at all levels in all countries.
4. that the value of women's work in the home and the economy be recognized.
5. that cheaper farming implements and inputs such as seed and fertilizer be provided and extension services with an integrated approach be embarked upon. Women should be taught better agricultural methods including soil preservation.
6. that fair prices for goods from rural areas and better transport facilities be provided by governments.
7. that people be encouraged to use local materials in order to cut imports of expensive ones, e.g. poles, stones, sand, grass and mud, which, if properly finished and used, could be just as effective.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, OAU AND GOVERNMENTS OF ALL COUNTRIES IN AFRICA

We, the participants of the LWF All-Africa Conference for Women in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, discussed education in general. Since education is the basis for understanding in all spheres of life, we recommend :

1. that more facilities be provided for formal education at secondary and higher institutions with priority for women.
2. that curricula be improved to enable education for self-employment.
3. that literacy and numeracy programmes be launched (or encouraged where they exist) in order to wipe out illiteracy. Adult education should be regarded as a priority.
4. that vocational and technical programmes for school leavers be initiated and encouraged where they exist.
5. that research into the condition of women and the circumstances which prevent their total development be carried out in order that steps can be taken to bring about change.



## EAST AFRICA REGION

### IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND APPRECIATION

#### A. IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS

1. There is a need for a regional committee which would meet once a year to discuss issues and plans for the Region. The Committee should be composed of executive women leaders of each country. It is necessary that the representative be a citizen of the country to be represented. We propose that the first meeting be held in Madagascar in August 1980, immediately preceeding the National Congress of that country.
2. There is a need for circulating information among the member countries of our region through newsletters, etc.
3. There is a need to have more women in Church Executive Committees as well as to have them serve in all posts within the church structures.
4. Women in our region need education in the field of theology; they also need training in literacy and other fields, such as administration, so as to equip them for full participation in the church.
5. There is a need for exchange programmes within the region, such as: study tours, short-term personnel exchange or visitation programmes and exchange of teaching materials.

#### B. RECOMMENDATIONS

We, the East African participants of the LWF All-Africa Consultation for Women meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, recommend :

##### To the LWF Women's Desk

1. that the staff of the LWF Women's Desk and the regional consultant visit the member churches more often in order to familiarize themselves with the situation of the different churches, and that they should feel free to initiate such visits.
2. that after this consultation regional follow-up seminars be organized.
3. that the three months' service of the regional consultant be extended to a longer time period to enable her to carry out the necessary work.

4. that as much information as possible be circulated to the member churches.
5. that the possibility of a seminar on "The Role of the Church within a Given Ideological Context" be considered.

To the LWF Department of Studies

That a special category of scholarships be created to be allocated to women leaders.

To the LWF Member Churches

1. That possibilities be found to sponsor women through LWF scholarships in the following areas of study :
  - a) short courses and seminars in theology, especially for women who are engaged in work with and among women;
  - b) economics, marketing and planning;
  - c) promotion of handicrafts.

and that more women should be encouraged to participate in the scholarship programme.
2. that young women who finish their training in Bible Colleges be given equal chances of service to their male counterparts, and that the training of young women be of the same nature as that of the young men.
3. that the ordination of qualified women theologians into the ministry be seriously considered in order to give equal place to women in the church structures and to encourage other women to take up theological training.
4. that funds be made available for conducting courses and seminars for women: a) concerning their rights, especially with regard to marriage, and b) regarding development programmes.
5. that leadership training for volunteer workers be provided and that the possibility of providing full-time, paid personnel for work with and among women be considered.
6. that funds for exchange programmes be requested from relevant organizations.
7. that projects planned by and for women be given priority and support.



To Women's Organizations of LWF Member Churches

1. That the possibility of exchanging handicrafts with a view to learning from each other and of raising income be considered.
2. That low-cost, income-generating projects be initiated.
3. That women's organizations be open to criticism with regard to their programmes.
4. That the programmes of the organizations respond to the needs and interests of women of different educational levels.
5. That women be made aware of the availability of LWF scholarships and that churches be urged to forward more applications from women to the Geneva office.

C. APPRECIATION

We, the East African participants of the LWF All-Africa Consultation for Women meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, thank the LWF Women's Desk for :

- a) the appointment of regional consultants;
  - b) for seminars already conducted, especially for the Advanced Leadership Development Seminar for Women, Bossey, Switzerland, 1978, and for this consultation in Gaborone;
  - c) for the various assistance in providing work, materials and information.
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## SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### To the Women's League of Zambia

We, the participants of the Lutheran World Federation All-Africa Consultation for Women, meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, 2 - 9 March, 1980, recognize that the women of Zambia suffered great hardships under the present law of succession. Noting that this law will be reviewed by the Parliament in the near future, we urge you to organize the women of Zambia so that under your leadership they can intervene with Parliament to reform this law.

#### To the Minister Designate, The Honourable R.G. Mugabe

Greetings to you from the Lutheran World Federation All-Africa Consultation for Women, meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980. We congratulate you on your overwhelming election victory and wish peace and prosperity for the independent Zimbabwe. Looking forward with great expectations to this new period of Zimbabwe's history, we urge you to give immediate attention to the reform of laws under which the black women of Zimbabwe experienced great hardships: particularly to the laws regarding the minority status of women and to those pertaining to marriage, inheritance and the guardianship of children.

To the YWCA Council of Zimbabwe,  
Box 3170, Salisbury  
and

To the Christian Council of Zimbabwe  
Bible House, Salisbury

Greetings to you from the Lutheran World Federation All-Africa Consultation for Women, meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980.

Concerned about the hardships suffered by the women of Zimbabwe under the present laws of succession, minority status and family law, we urge you to organize the women of Zimbabwe so that they can assist the new government in the reform of these laws.



To the Churches in Zimbabwe and all Christian Organizations working there

We, the participants of the LWF All-Africa Consultation for Women meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, March 2 - 9, 1980, are concerned about the adverse effects the long struggle in Zimbabwe have had on the people of the country. We therefore urge you to give priority to rehabilitation programmes, including the supply of food, water and medication, thus allowing the country to resume normal life with as little hardship as possible.

To the Association of Botswana's Women's Organizations

Concerned about the hardships that still have to be suffered by women in the rural areas, we urge you to assist your members in the speeding up of development in these rural areas.

To the LWF Department of Studies

- a) Concerned about the hardships experienced by students in obtaining scholarships for secondary education, we urge that more scholarships be made available.
- b) Aware of the need to develop leadership and practical skills for women, we recommend that funds be made available for seminars to be held at more regular intervals.
- c) Concerned about the unemployment of women in Soweto, Johannesburg, we request that income-generating projects be initiated and supported.

To the LWF Community Development Service

We, the participants of the LWF All-Africa Consultation for Women, are concerned about the situation in Soweto and the need for a community project centre. We request the Community Development Service to give special attention to this area and to support the building of a community centre or projects.

To the Church Council in Namibia and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in South-West Africa

Aware of the hardships women of Namibia suffer and of the need to develop the potential of women, we recommend that the church in Namibia organize leadership training courses and seminars for women.

To the LWF Women's Desk

In view of the isolation Namibian women, and women in the Southern African region in general, have suffered, we recommend that funds be made available for women to undertake study tours.

To the Economic Commission for Africa and the LWF Women's Desk

1. Being aware of the need for closer co-operation as well as the lack of leadership development and administrative skills among women in the southern African region, we recommend that the ECA in conjunction with the LWF Women's Desk organize a workshop for women in the region.
2. Concerned about the development of women and about the participation of women in national and international affairs, we recommend that governments and churches include women as delegates especially when dealing with issues related to women.

To the AACC, WCC and LWF

Recognizing that theological training for women and ordination of women is still an unfamiliar issue in Africa, we recommend that seminars for theologically trained women be organized in order to deal with issues related to women's theological training and to the ordination of those women who feel called to the ordained ministry.

To the Conference for Ordained Women, Rochester, Minnesota, 1980

Dear Sisters,

Greetings to you from the participants of the LWF All-Africa Consultation for Women, held in Gaborone, Botswana, 2 - 9 March, 1980.

We congratulate you on the 10th anniversary of the ordination of women in your church.

As you know, African Lutheran women are not allowed to be ordained, although some of us are theologically trained, some of us desire to be trained, and despite the fact that we feel called to the ordained ministry. We would, therefore, like to ask your conference to send a message to the LWF All-Africa Lutheran Consultation on Christian Theology, to be held April 10-18, 1980 in Monrovia, Liberia, reassuring them of the positive experience your churches have had with ordained women, and encouraging them to support and endorse the ordination of African women.

With many thanks in advance and wishing you God's blessings for your conference,

Your Sisters.

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## WEST AFRICA REGION

### PLAN OF ACTION

In view of the fact that our women leaders in the churches in West Africa have had no formal training in leadership and other programmes of the church, we recognize the need for leadership training and therefore recommend to the LWF Women's Desk the following :

1. that on the local level, a workshop on leadership and other related programmes be held in 1980.
2. that on the regional level, a seminar to assess the work and achievement done on the local level in 1981 be held.
3. that various programmes and projects as proposed by the church women in the following countries be implemented :
  - a) Ghana - provide adequate water supply for one village as a pilot project.
  - b) Nigeria - set up a center for handicapped children in Cross River State and a domestic science center in Gongola State.
  - c) Cameroun - assist the churches of Cameroun in carrying out literacy programmes by providing literature and teaching aids and also provide funds for the establishment of a poultry farm - a fund-generating project.
  - d) Liberia
    - i) Funds for small-scale industry among women;
    - ii) Play center for children.

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# **lwf all asia conference for women**

**singapore, november 1980**

**by roger kahle**

"The truly educated and liberated woman is neither pro-man nor pro-woman but pro-human. She therefore sees liberation as a breaking down of barriers between old-young, sick-well, handicapped-whole, rich-poor, male and female - to help bring about a new heaven and a new earth", Sister Evelyn Coronel director of Sister Formation Institute in Manila, told sixty-eight Lutheran women from Asia and the Pacific at a week-long (November 9-15) conference. Sister Coronel urged the women to "destroy the old structures and behaviour of dominance and replace them with new models of human relationships."

The women who were joined by eleven ecumenical participants and representatives of UNICEF, the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) passed a fistful of resolutions that ranged from urging Lutheran World Federation (LWF) member churches in Asia to begin ordaining women by the end of 1984 to asking the local churches, the LWF, ILO and WHO to develop recreation centres for the aged and rehabilitation centres for the disabled.

The conference, with its theme "New Vision, Freedom and Response" was sponsored by the LWF Department of Studies' Women's Desk. It was followed by a six-day Asian Conference for Theologically Trained Women (November 17-22). This was the first time the LWF has held a meeting in Asia for women in the whole region to discuss their needs and goals.



In one of the major addresses to the conference, an Indonesian Presbyterian theologian, Marianne Katoppo, challenged some of the theological impressions of women. "Have we asked ourselves what is the clear meaning of the (Genesis 3) text, the true role of Eve in the paradise story? Or are we content with just writing her off as 'the temptress', one stereotype of woman, Mary, the sugar sweet 'Virgin Mother' being the other?", she asked. Marianne Katoppo urged the searching for other models. She gave examples from Batak culture "Inanta Soripada" (our mother, the center of all good) and "Boru Ni Raja" (daughter of a king).

The Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme, who is completing the last of her nine years as LWF secretary for women in the church, said women in finding a new identity can help "form a humanity which is capable of building a meaningful future and which is able to create a world where everyone can live in dignity."

Among the 12 pages of resolutions passed on the final day of the conference were resolutions calling for Annual Women's Leadership Conferences, expanding the work of women's regional consultants, promoting consciousness-raising on socio-political issues, developing indigenous Asian liturgies and clerical vestments, greater efforts to combat illiteracy, help for the problems of youth and recommending to the editorial board of Asia Lutheran News the inclusion of pages devoted to women's news. The conference also challenged the LWF to have 50 per cent women representation at its 1984 Assembly scheduled for Budapest, Hungary, as well as increasing the numbers of women on the Executive Committee and the executive staff to 50 per cent and passed a resolution thanking the Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme for her "assistance, contribution and love" during her nine years at the Women's Desk.

The resolution on women's ordination asked LWF member churches in Asia to pass constitutional amendments permitting the practice by December 31, 1982. And it called upon the Asian churches to "ordain qualified, theologically trained women as full partners in ministry" and develop "systematic strategies for recruiting women as theological students" by the end of 1984. A resolution on needs of the aged and disabled called on governments "to give higher priority to the development of social security systems which are inclusive of all persons".

# recommendations

## TO THE LWF WOMEN'S DESK AND THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES

re: Leadership Development

Whereas many women have not had adequate opportunities to develop leadership skills;

Whereas some cultural patterns have limited the involvement of women in leadership roles in church and society;

Whereas women are becoming increasingly aware of their responsibility to assume leadership;

Whereas leadership training within specific areas and crossculturally contributes to the life and witness of the church;

Whereas women need to assume responsible roles in building a just and peaceful society;

*It is, therefore, recommended:*

### TO THE LWF WOMEN'S DESK

1. that annually leadership workshops be conducted in Asia and the Pacific;
2. that at least triennially joint workshops be conducted for Asian/Pacific and African women;
3. that annually study, action, exchange programs be implemented to foster mutual understanding and solidarity among women.

*It is, therefore, recommended:*

### TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES

1. that on a continuing basis women be made conscious of the needs of their communities and encouraged to be active leaders in meeting these needs in church and society;



2. that annually workshops and seminars be conducted to develop leadership skills among women for tasks in church and society locally and worldwide;
3. that annually workshops on specific concerns, i.e. nutrition, sanitation, sex education, vocational training be conducted;
4. that on a continuing basis printed and audio-visual resources be developed and/or utilized for leadership development;
5. that women trained and qualified to plan, implement and coordinate work with and among women be employed.

#### TO THE LWF WOMEN'S DESK

re: Regional Consultants

Acknowledging the contribution of Regional Consultants in meeting the needs of women in Asia;

Noting the increasing demands of women to develop to their full potential as individuals and as participants in church and society;

Recognizing that present time allocations are inadequate for meeting the required demands.

#### *It is recommended:*

1. that the role and work of the Regional Consultants be reviewed periodically;
2. that wherever necessary the period of employment of Regional Consultants be increased.

## TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES IN ASIA

re: Socio-Political Consciousness

Whereas politics is frequently misunderstood and considered to be outside the mission of the church;

Whereas there is a need to arouse the consciousness of women to be involved politically;

Whereas the church is called to minister to the needs of a person spiritually, socially and politically.

*It is, therefore, recommended:*

1. that study and research programs on socio-political issues, i.e. justice, education, health be initiated throughout the church;
2. that multiple avenues for consciousness-raising be utilized, including sermons;
3. that all members (men and women) and leaders of the respective churches take an active role in the social and political issues facing them, i.e. prostitution, refugees, abortion, rape, low wages, violence and dowry, taking a positive stand for justice and human rights;
4. that Christian women be encouraged to take positions of leadership in social and political affairs.

## TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES IN ASIA

re: New Forms of Liturgy and Worship in Asia

Whereas Asian countries have their own culture and tradition which should be affirmed;

Whereas Lutheran churches in Asia are influenced by foreign cultures and traditions;

Whereas Asian churches should express their own identity in worship.

*It is, therefore, recommended:*

that by December 31, 1985, indigenous Asian liturgies, clerical vestments and music should be developed and utilized throughout the churches.

## TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES IN ASIA

re: Ordination of Women

Recognizing that women and men are equal before God;

Recognizing that there is no theological basis for excluding women from the ordained ministry;

Recognizing that withholding ordination from women denies them free choice in responding to God's call;

Recognizing that in many countries of Asia, cultural barriers still limit the role of the male pastor in ministering to women;

Recognizing that women have and can make a both unique and complementary contribution to the life and work of the church.

*It is recommended:*

1. that by December 31, 1982, where necessary, constitutional amendments be made enabling women to be ordained;
2. that by December 31, 1984, all the LWF member churches in Asia ordain qualified, theologically trained women as full partners in ministry;
3. that by December 31, 1984, systematic strategies for recruiting women as theological students be developed and implemented.



## TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES IN ASIA

re: Illiteracy

Whereas illiteracy is extensive throughout Asia;

Whereas being unable to read limits persons from developing to their fullest potential;

Whereas being unable to read frequently supports superstition and inadequate health care;

Whereas being unable to read contributes to underdevelopment politically, socially and economically;

Whereas the church can play a significant role in equipping people to read and write.

*It is, therefore, recommended:*

1. that by December 31, 1984, at least two ways be identified in which cooperative efforts with the government and/or other agencies can be implemented to increase the number of persons who are functionally literate;
2. that as soon as possible these cooperative efforts be implemented.

## TO THE LWF CHURCH LEADERS

re: Youth, Their Problems and Their Needs

Recognizing that there is an alarming increase in the percentage of school drop-outs due to political, financial and social reasons;

Recognizing that there is an increase in the migration of the young to the urban areas due to the attraction of the urban way of life;

Recognizing that there is an increase in juvenile delinquency due to the lack of parental guidance and care, and lack of the necessities of everyday life such as food, money and clothing, and also due to the influence of other factors in society;

Recognizing that there is a large number of orphans and homeless due to war, death of parents, prostitution and natural disasters, i.e. earthquakes, typhoons, floods, etc.

*It is recommended:*

1. that by 1985, wherever necessary, vocational training centres be established to provide technical training leading to employment of youth;
2. that on a continuing basis, education in child/parent relationships and family life development be provided;
3. that regularly programs to combat problems related to crisis situations be developed and implemented.

## TO THE LWF, ITS MEMBER CHURCHES, UNICEF AND WHO

re: Health Measures in Rural and Urban Situations

Acknowledging that primary health care is the basic approach for achieving optimum health in rural situations;

Realizing that there is an urgent need to provide basic health information, i.e. nutrition, sanitation, immunization, child care, in the rural situations;

Realizing that although para-medical workers exist in some situations they are either inaccessible, inadequate or not fully utilized to the extent required due to traditional, cultural and physical constraints;

Aware that in urban situations mental health problems frequently exist as a result of socio-economic competitive pressures and industrialization.

*It is recommended:*

1. that health education and child care programs be increased to promote maternal and child health in rural situations;
2. that para-medical training programs be held more frequently for local women;
3. that provision of medical services and facilities be increased in rural situations, i.e. health clinics;
4. that provision for counselling services be made in urban areas wherever necessary and feasible.

TO THE LOCAL CHURCHES, LWF, WHO, ILO

re: The Needs of the Aged

Being aware of the neglect of the aged often fostered by the rapidly changing family patterns;

Being aware of the psychological and physical needs, i.e. emotional, environmental, financial, of the aged;

Being aware of the fact that women have a longer life span.

*It is recommended:*

1. that governmental and nongovernmental organizations devote attention to the conscientization of the total community concerning the needs of the aged;
2. that governments be encouraged to give higher priority to the development of social security systems which are inclusive of all persons;
3. that supportive recreation centres be developed for the aged and rehabilitation centres for the disabled.



TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION OF THE LWF AND  
THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES IN ASIA

re: Communication

Recognizing the difficulties in communicating due to language differences and illiteracy in most rural areas;

Recognizing that most Asian women are unaware of what is going on around them due to inadequate communication;

Noting that most newsletters being circulated are printed in English and of a standard that is generally not understood by the majority.

*It is recommended:*

1. that wherever necessary, with LWF assistance, local churches develop their own programs, i.e. cassette tapes, records, film/slides, etc., to meet their own needs;
2. that the Editorial Board of the ALN be asked to include a minimum of four pages for news about women's concerns and their contributions in church and society;
3. that women be informed of the name of the ALN correspondent in their area and be encouraged to transmit news through their correspondent;
4. that churches in each area be requested to translate communications, i.e. newsletters, articles, in local languages and dialects;
5. that the LWF Women's Desk be encouraged to use simplified English in the Newsletter "Women".

TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES IN ASIA,  
THE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC,  
AND THE LWF

re: Global Partnership and Peace

Whereas as Christians, we are called to be partners with God to build His kingdom where people live together harmoniously in solidarity and peace with justice;

Whereas there are obstacles to establishing equitable partnership and peace in the world and in the Asian region in particular, i.e.

- domination by developed countries through economic exploitation and political interference,
- desire for power and the expansion of national boundaries by some countries,
- economic imbalance,
- spread of conflicting ideologies,
- build-up of the arms race,
- racism.

*It is, therefore, recommended:*

1. that regular meetings to promote unity first in our communities and surroundings be initiated and continued in all churches;
2. that there be an exchange of experiences, personnel and literature in order to promote a greater understanding between countries;
3. that joint actions and programs among churches and countries which can bridge the gap between tribes, races, regions and countries be initiated before the end of 1982;
4. that there should be cooperation and coordination between churches and other organisations and agencies working towards world peace and emancipation of the oppressed;
5. that public opinion be mobilized to protest against the building-up of arms and nuclear weapons.

## TO THE LWF AND ITS MEMBER CHURCHES IN ASIA

re: Participation of Women in the Decision-Making Processes  
in the Church

Whereas women and men are equal before God;

Whereas the church is much poorer because it is not making full use of its total human resources;

Whereas women constitute the majority of the church's membership and attendance;

Whereas women are eager to assume their full responsibility in the life and work of the church;

Whereas deliberate steps need to be taken to promote wholeness by recognizing the views and life experiences of both women and men.

*It is, therefore, recommended:*

### TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES IN ASIA

1. that by December 31, 1983, wherever necessary, procedures and documents be amended to ensure women's right to vote;
2. that on an annual basis workshops be conducted to develop decision-making skills of women and men;
3. that on a continuing basis supportive structures and programs be developed, i.e. baby sitting, encouragement in sharing household tasks, to facilitate the participation of women in the decision-making processes;
4. that by December 31, 1985, the representation of women on decision-making bodies throughout the church (local, national and international) be at least 50 per cent.

### TO THE LWF

1. that at the 1984 LWF Assembly 50 per cent of the delegation be women;
2. that 50 per cent of the officers of the LWF Executive Committee be women;
3. that 50 per cent of the executive positions of the LWF be filled by women.



## TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES IN ASIA

re: Education in "Legal Rights"

Whereas most women are not aware of their legal rights (as persons) or channels of appeal open to them;

Whereas most women's problems are often connected with legal technicalities;

Whereas there is legal protection which is often poorly implemented and sometimes abused;

Whereas women are often degraded, dehumanized and humiliated as they seek their legal rights.

*It is, therefore, recommended:*

1. where legal aid is available steps be taken to disseminate information through women's and community organizations;
2. that church women support women needing legal aid by being their advocates and taking action on their behalf;
3. that where no legal aid is available the church work towards the establishment of "social concerns offices" and "legal aid bureaus".

## TO THE LWF, WCC, CCA, AND THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES

re: Theological Education for Women

Recognizing the fact that there is a scarcity of theologically trained women in the Lutheran churches of Asia and the Pacific;

Recognizing the need for theologically trained full-time women workers in specialized responsibilities (e.g. teachers in Bible schools, chaplains in schools, colleges, hospitals, deaconess work, Ashram work) in the churches;

Recognizing that women and men are equally needed in the ordained ministry, therefore women should have freedom to respond to the call for full participation;

Recognizing that the unique gifts of both women and men together constitute a fuller embodiment of ministry in the world;

Recognizing that the theology of women provides new insights and confronts the church in making theology relevant;

Recognizing the need for Asian women professors in seminaries.

*It is recommended:*

TO THE LWF MEMBER CHURCHES

1. that the Lutheran churches avail themselves of the scholarship opportunities such as provided by ATSSEC (Association of Theological Schools in South East Asia) which gives priority to scholarships for theological education of women at all levels (e.g. B.Th., B.D., M.Th., Th.D.) and LWF;
2. that by the year 1984 the respective Lutheran churches make the necessary amendments to their constitutions and procedures to enable women to have theological education and to be employed in positions for which they are trained.

TO THE LWF, WCC, CCA

that priority be given to providing scholarships for women to have theological education at all levels (e.g. B.Th., B.D., M.Th., Th.D.)

**TO THE LWF WOMEN'S DESK**

re: Regional Conferences and International Consultations

Recognizing that there is a great need to promote better understanding and solidarity among the women of Asia and the Pacific.

*It is recommended:*

1. that once every four years regional conferences be conducted;
2. that once every six years international consultations be conducted.

**TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STUDIES OF THE LWF****APPRECIATION**

1. for the assistance, contribution and love of the Rev. Éva Zabolai-Csekme to the Asian Lutheran Church Women during the past nine years of her service at the Women's Desk;
2. for the appointment of the Regional Consultants;
3. for conducting the All Asia Conference for Women, November 9-15, 1980.



# **lwf asian conference for theologically trained women**

**singapore, november 1980**

**by david lin**

The ministry of women can be a "supplanting ministry" today, which means "ministering where the need is, possibly supplanting a less eligible person - male or female," Sister S. Elizabeth Paul of India told the 40-some Lutheran church women at the Asian Conference for Theologically Trained Women held in Singapore (November 17-22) by the Theological Education Desk in cooperation with the Women's Desk of the LWF. Sister Paul is minister in charge of Wesley Church in Madras.

Regarding the identity of women, Dr. Lois Leffler of the Lutheran Church Women in the USA in her lecture, "Salvation: Its Meaning for Identity, Well Being and Relationship", focused on seven understandings, attitudes and actions from the Bible that include women. Among them was the concept of "diakonia" as the style of Christian ministry that "does not reinforce the frequent concept of women as servants". She said there should be no domination and subordination in church ministry. She concluded that neither men nor women are "boxed into stereotypical roles... Both are called to live responsibly in relationship to God, to themselves, to one another and to the world".

The theme of the conference was "Women's full participation for a renewed community." The women delegates from 10 Asian countries were also given lectures on "Feminist theology: an interim assessment" by a Dutch Roman Catholic theologian, Dr. Catharina Halkes; on "Flight from ministry: women and ordination" by Professor Letty M. Russell of Yale University (USA), and "Indigenous theology - culture and tradition" by Dr. B.V. Subbamma of India.

The question of women's ordination, which attracted the most attention among the issues discussed by the Asian women participants, was con-

sidered as a "partnership service" in the church ministry. Russell said, "Women can play a role in the renewal of more equal partnerships in ministry by contributing their own unique styles and gifts in ministry." And many of the women's gifts are ignored because they cannot be ordained, she said.

Halkes said feminist theology is a liberation theology. It is finding ways to abolish the "separation, polarization and mutual degradation" of the two sexes under any circumstances in order for women to reach the level of being fully "human".

Thirteen issues centering on women's ministry and theological education were dealt with by the delegates in the final sessions of the conference. Their recommendations to the Lutheran churches in Asia, the LWF and related organizations included the recruitment of more theology students and the allocation of scholarships and jobs to those trained women, the full participation of women in church decision-making bodies, the development of leadership skills, the formations of regional and national theologically trained women's associations, the continuation of women's ministry after their marriage, the ordination of women by December 1983, the development and use of indigenous Asian liturgies, clerical vestments and music, the revision and adjustment of salary scales of church workers and the adoption and implementation of their pension and retirement plans and training national writers for communication and publication in local languages.

It was also recommended that the agenda of the Asia Lutheran Church Leaders Consultation, Hong Kong, February 1981, include the issue of the ordination of women and the full participation of women in the life and work of the church. A regional follow-up consultation was recommended for the Chinese speaking women.

The report and recommendations of the consultation are available from the Theological Education Desk of the LWF.





THE COMMUNITY OF WOMEN AND MEN -  
ROOTED IN THE NEW CREATION

by Éva Zabolai-Csekne

*"Nicht Gott bekennd mit unserem  
Wort und Gott verachtend mit  
unserem Leben, sondern Gott getreu  
dienend durch die Bildung einer  
Menschengemeinschaft nach seinem  
Sinn." \** Martin Buber

With this discussion paper I respond to the request of the LWF Commission on Studies to prepare "a specification of the theological dimension of the Women's Desk" for "a solid theological foundation for the partnership between women and men" was considered "a necessity".

One does not need to search long for this solid theological foundation, for it is given right in the central message of Christ. The theological foundation for the new community between women and men lies in the new covenant of God, in the possibility which the new creation offers and in the life and death acceptance and love of Christ for each human being.

In order to really understand what the new creation is about, let us turn to the story of the creation and the story of the fall as we find them in Genesis 2-3. (1)

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\* Quoted from : Martin Stöhr: "Juden-Christen-Deutsche" which appeared in Arnoldshainer Akzente 4/78, page 39.

(1) In this exegesis I am largely following the interpretation of Frank Crüsemann, see: "Als Mann und Frau geschaffen", Burckhardthaus-Verlag, 1978.

It is obvious that the stories are related. The author writes them out of the situation of a fallen world where human beings have to work hard to make a living, where women have to suffer in giving birth to children, where men rule over women, where the harmonious relationship with nature and with the animals is broken, where the field is cursed and where the relationship between God and people is a broken one. Yet the author preserves the idea of God's good creation in the story of the Garden of Eden. In presenting the two contrasting, yet similar situations, the author (Jahwist) is trying to convey the following message: - The world as it is, is not good. People have to work hard and suffer. Men oppress women. Nature is cursed. God could not have created a world like this and called it good. The existing situation is not that of God's good creation, but that of a fallen world. In the story of the fall he tries to explain why the present situation exists and in the story of the Garden of Eden he describes what he believes to be God's good creation.

We realize that the two stories have many similarities. The author describes the creation of the sky, nature, of birds, animals and that of the human being. These components remain also after the fall. It is the relationship between them that changes.

Let us pay some attention to the relationship between woman and man. The "human" that God created is not complete. Creation is not good due to the solitude of the human being. An experiment with animals proves negative. The human being needs "help". It is clear that "help" is not meant in a subordinate way, for the same Hebrew word is used here as in other places when referring to God as helper. It is also clear that this "help" does not refer to labour alone. What the human being needs is the interrelation with an equivalent. This animals cannot provide. Woman is therefore created out of a part of the human being's body.

The appearance of the woman is greeted with joy: "Bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh". This is a usual form of expressing kinship in many parts of the Old Testament (e.g., Gen. 29:14; Judges 9:2; 2 Sam.5:1; etc.).

The consequence of the appearance of the woman, besides joy, is that the man leaves his parents and is united with the woman.

The "human" keeps his right to name the woman as he named all creation. Yet in naming the woman he has to rename himself. (This is the point at which the author switches from "Adam" to "iś", the Hebrew equivalent for man, i.e., the male.) The woman cannot be recognized without the "human being" becoming "man" and understanding himself in a new way. For identity of human beings is never defined in isolation, but only in relation to God, to other human beings and to the rest of creation. - The intention of the text is a liberating one: creation is now completed, the relation between man and woman is that of joyful interdependence and now the creation is called "good".

It is also important to note what is not said in this story, namely that the reason for the creation of the woman is the bearing of children, (especially sons). Children are not even mentioned. - Although the reality of Israel's daily life was a different one, the author describes the reason for the creation of woman as follows:

1. the need for each other, also in a situation where there is no economic need;
2. total equivalence;
3. exultation and shameless joy of each other.

This was God's goal, and whenever human beings experience some of this, there is a sign of the Garden of Eden.

### The Fall

Here the author recognizes that the woman is punished twice. She has to suffer more. She also has to work hard and she has to die (he returns to the usage of the word "Adam" which means both male and female). In telling the story of the fall, he tries to find answers to questions such as: why has the woman to suffer more than the man? Why is she subdued by the man? As an explanation he gives the story of the apple.



The resulting new situation is the following: the animals are alienated from the human beings, the field is cursed, the woman, whose appearance created exultation and joy, is oppressed by the man. The original equivalent relationship is broken. In a sense, the human being returns to the solitude which in the creation God called "not good".

Theological interpretations presented the existing situation as God's intention. They gave the story of the fall a binding character. Yet the intention of the author is a different one. He describes the negativity of human existence not as the good creation of God, but as suffering resulting from transgression. The present situation is described as bad, resulting from the fact that human beings wanted to decide for themselves what is good and what is bad for them and did not leave this decision to the will of God.

It is important to note that the punishment of the human beings carries an element of grace. Children are mentioned as a merciful act of God, for the punishment of death is modified through them. The sky, the field, the animals remain with the woman and the man, but the relationship between them changes. Also, God remains with the human being, but not in the same immediacy which was so beautifully expressed in the lyrical description: "In the cool of the eve, God was walking in the Garden". The dream of the Garden of Eden is also carried over into the new situation, and later there is the promise that one day someone will come to step on the head of the serpent, thus enabling the dream of the Garden of Eden to become a possibility.

#### The New Creation

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14)

We notice that these words have a great resemblance to the immediacy with which the presence of God is described in the Garden of Eden. As a matter of fact that is what the incarnation of Christ is about. The promise has become true, people have the possibility to enter into a new relationship with God, a new era has started, the era of the new covenant, the era of new possibilities. We are no longer bound to the relationships and

structures of the fallen world, but we are set free to enter new relationships, create new structures which are closer to those of the Garden of Eden.

The entire life and proclamation of Christ is a unique witness to this end. He has come to recreate the world so that God can call it "good" again.

He has come

- to preach good news to the poor
- to proclaim release to the captives
- to help recover the sight of the blind
- to set at liberty those who are oppressed
- to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19)

The birth, the life and the death of Christ convey the unique message that the basis for our existence is no longer to be found in the structures and possibilities of the fallen world, but in the structures and possibilities of new creation.

The subjugation of women and the assignment of inferior roles and fewer possibilities to them is the result of the transgressing, fallen world. In the new creation, the structures and relationships of the fallen world give way to the new covenant, to a new acceptance and to new relationships. In the new creation Jews and gentiles, poor and rich, women and men, young and old, people of different races, casts or social standing have the possibility to be called children of God and enjoy all the privileges and responsibilities which this new relationship entails. In the new covenant it is not the social customs or oppressive structures which give us our first and foremost identity, but God's acceptance of us as children and heirs of the divine. This love and acceptance of God revalues the concept of the "other" totally. In the new creation, the "other" is no longer a possible object for exploitation or oppression, but a point at which God and human beings meet. When Christ said that we encounter him in the smallest of our brothers and sisters, he made each of us a potential meeting place between God and human beings.



What does this mean for us as men and women who had the grace to be confronted with the Gospel? How can we ever despise each other, how can we ever belittle or ridicule each other, how can we ever subjugate each other, when we recognize the image of the incarnated Christ in each other?

The word of God became incarnate and dwelt among us; the closeness, the immediacy of God is again a possibility. The relationship between God and human beings does not need to be a broken one, but God and human beings can again walk together. And as God and people can again walk together, people and people have the possibility to walk together too. The solitude of the man and the solitude of the woman can be changed into a new community in which people can recognize a sign of God's kingdom.

The church as a community entrusted with the communication of the Gospel is called to set a sign to the kingdom of God which has been promised us and which is present wherever the liberating, saving and transforming power of Christ is incarnate. Therefore the question of women in the church is not a marginal issue, but one which touches the core of the church's identity and mission. When the women's movement in general and feminist theology in particular challenge the church with regard to its attitude toward women as expressed in its theology, liturgy and worship, proclamation, structures, history and access to the ordained ministry, they ask how far the church is ready to exist as a sign of the kingdom of God here and now. The struggle for the acceptance of women is at the same time a struggle for the trustworthiness of the church's proclamation. For the communication of the Gospel does not only happen through words but also through actions, structures, relationships. Once an African man said to a missionary: "What you are speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say". Statistics from the Federal Republic of Germany confirm that this is also true for the church. Of one thousand church leavers questioned, only two said that there was something wrong with the message of Christ. The rest left the church for reasons related to its actions and structures.

The task of the Women's Desk is therefore to serve as a catalyst in the creation of a new community between women and men, thereby contributing



to the transformation of the church and to the trustworthiness and effectiveness of its proclamation and mission.

It is clear that the relationship between women and men in the church is one of the strongest evidences that the church has not understood the possibilities given in the new covenant of God and is not ready to exist as a sign of the kingdom here and now. The refusal to ordain women in many LWF member churches and to include them in the decision-making bodies bears witness to the fact that the structures of the fallen world still dominate the church. There is obviously no biblical-theological reason for the refusal to ordain women. So far every serious, scholarly commission set up to study this issue came to the same conclusion. Even the Roman Catholic Bishops' Commission created by the Vatican made it more than clear that there is no biblical-theological evidence against the ordination of women. The reason for not ordaining women, they declared, must be located in the tradition of the church.

On the other hand, there are numerous theological reasons for women's ordination and their inclusion in the leadership of the church. Let me just list a few of the more obvious ones:

The first lies in the theological anthropology of the message of Christ. In Gen. 1:27 we read: "God created the human being in the divine image, male and female, God created them". Theologically speaking this is the most important mark that distinguishes the human being from the rest of creation. It is only the human being whose creation is preceded by the following statement: "Let us create human beings in our image, after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26). Note that Gen. 1:26-28 makes it very clear that both women and men were created in the divine image, both bear the likeness of God and both are given the power of dominion over the earth. There is no qualitative difference between the humanity of the male and the humanity of the female. Both are endowed with intellect, creativity and power and both are bearers of God's image.

The entire teaching, the life and death of Christ also witness to this end. He died for all human beings regardless of their sex, race or nationality. Every human being who believes in God is called the child of God and heir to God's reign. The first and foremost identity of a human being is, therefore, given in the love and acceptance of God and not in his or her biological, cultural or social identity. When the church excludes from the ordained ministry those children of God whom Christ found important enough to give his life for, it perpetuates the ideas of Aristotle, the early church fathers and later Thomas Aquinas, who proclaimed the defective humanity of women, rather than follow the message of Christ concerning new creation.

The second obvious reason for the ordination of women lies in the New Testament's concept of ministry and priesthood.

There are two important texts where Paul speaks decidedly in favour of equality of the different services and against setting one form of ministry above the other. Both Rom. 12:3-8 and 1 Cor. 12:4-11 make it clear that the different gifts people receive all come from God and all should be used in the service of God. Paul warns against anyone feeling superior to the others because he received the gift of proclamation or the gift of teaching, etc. In these texts Paul also makes it clear that the gifts and talents are given by God and not assigned to people by other people. It is not human beings who decide who should serve God and how, but it is God who calls different people to different services, all of which have equal value in the eyes of God and all of which should have equal value in the eyes of all Christians.

If we take these texts seriously, we have to agree that there is no differentiation between women and men. God does not assign talents according to sex, God does not call people into the ministry according to sex. The record of women in the New Testament describing them as "diakonos" (Rom. 16:1) and co-workers in the proclamation of the Gospel (Phil. 4:2-4), and historic records like the famous letter of Pliny to the emperor Trajan which speaks of two "ministrae", or the mosaic in the Church of St. Praxedis in Rome, depicting a woman's body with the inscription



"Theodo(ra) episcopa" (2) are just a few of the many pieces of evidence which show that at least parts of the early church understood the liberating message of Christ.

It is also important to note the concept of Christ's ministry:

- The ministry of Christ is that of servanthood and self-sacrifice.
- The ministry of Christ is that of co-suffering with his people.
- The ministry of Christ is a total obedience to the will of God.
- The ministry of Christ is not that of elevation, but that of identification with the people to whom he is ministering.

If we really understand what the ministry of Christ is about, then how can we ever elevate the position of the ordained ministry to the point at which it becomes unattainable for certain people, especially for women? If we believe that the minister is to serve the people as Christ washed the feet of his disciples, how can we say that women are not worthy of becoming servants? If we follow what Paul says in Rom. 12 and 1Cor. 12 about the different talents, how can we ever elevate the ordained ministry above other ministries? If we understand that God is the one who calls people into the different services, how can we ever try to set ourselves above God by assigning the tasks according to sex and not according to talents?

The issue of women's ordination also makes us aware of the fact that throughout the centuries the church failed to think through basic human questions, such as the one of corporality and sexuality. It is interesting to note that most church fathers, both those whose records show a turbulent and excessive sex life, such as Jerome or Augustine, and those whose records don't mention any contact with women, e.g. Thomas Aquinas, made lengthy statements about marriage, celibacy, chastity, sexual desire and, above all, the sexuality of women. Yet most of those statements are based on the Aristotelian concept that a woman is a "misbegotten male", on the misunderstanding that sin equals sexuality, on men's fear of their own

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(2) Joan Morris, "The Lady was a Bishop" (New York/London; the MacMillan Company, 1973), p.4.



sexuality and the projection of this fear unto women, and on men's feelings of superiority to women.

- "Sin as such does not exist, but you make sin when you do what is of the nature of fornication, which is called 'sin'." (Clement of Alexandria: "The Gospel of Mary", quoted from Clarc and Richardson: "Women and Religion", p.50).
- "My face was pale with fasting; but though my limbs were cold as ice, my mind was burning with desire, and the fires of lust kept bubbling up before me when my flesh was as good as dead"... "Not that God, the Lord and Creator of the universe, takes any delight in the rumbling of our intestines or the emptiness of our stomach or the inflammation of our lungs; but because this is the only way of preserving chastity..." (Jerome; letter 22 (to Eustochium: The Virgin's Profession), quoted from Clarc and Richardson, p.56).
- "It is, however, one thing for married persons to have intercourse only for the wish to beget children, which is not sinful: it is another thing for them to desire carnal pleasure in cohabitation, but with the spouse only which involves venial sin" (Augustine: "On Marriage and Concupiscence" Book 1, chap. 17 No. 15).
- "As regards the individual nature, woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex; while the production of woman comes from defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence; such as that of a south wind, which is moist, as the Philosopher observes (De Gener: Animal. 4.2)". (Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologica, Part 1, Question 92, The Production of the Woman, First Article: "Whether the Woman should have been Made in the first Production of Things", quoted from Clarc and Richardson, p.87.)

This issue of corporality and sexuality needs to be dealt with in connection with the ordination of women for the following reason: in Christian theology we find both the condemnation of sexuality as something sinful and the description of women as sexual beings. These two beliefs combined lead to the misconception that woman is a sinful being and as such not capable of serving as a minister. We should not be led to believe that the above-quoted statements are exclusively a matter of the past. Last December I participated in a worship service in India in which the congregation was made to say in the confession of sins: "in sin did my mother conceive me". Discussing the question of the ordination of women, one often hears the

question: "How can a woman stand before the altar when she is pregnant?" Often these thoughts are not expressed openly for fear of ridicule, yet they keep influencing the decisions of the church leadership when considering questions of women in the church.

The question of corporality and sexuality is one which people in the church do not like to touch, yet it is time for us Christians to rectify our understanding of it, examining also to what extent the sexual ethic of the church contributed to the development of societies in which rape, violence, wife battering and killing are part of the daily life.

In addition to the question of ordination which, as we saw, raises many other questions, there are a number of issues which need to be dealt with concerning the new community between women and men. Let me list those which current literature recognizes as the most important ones:

1. Re-examination of biblical interpretations which were used to sanction patriarchal society's understanding of the role of women. This task offers the church a real chance for "metanoia" and renewal. There are serious efforts in this direction, both in the United States and on other continents. (On this point the second volume of the series "Kennzeichen" is highly recommended; Frank Crüsemann, Hartwig Thyen: "Als Mann und Frau geschaffen", Burckhardtshaus, Gelnhausen/Berlin, 1978.)

2. Rediscovery of women's lost history in the church. The participation of women in the life of the early church as well as in the church of the Middle Ages and of the Reformation period is little known to the general public. But even in theological seminaries one hardly notes that women were present in those epochs. Negligence, selective registration of events or intended modification of facts on the basis of patriarchal value systems are responsible for that. Yet, in the words of Letty Russell, we need a "usable past" in order to be able to work toward a meaningful future. Again, a number of interesting publications do exist, but the churches need to make use of them, both in their theological institutions and in their Christian education.



3. Recognizing the importance of inclusive language. Language always develops within a given social structure and, therefore, essentially reflects that structure. In our Judeo-Christian tradition, theology was expressed and recorded by means of that language which grew out of the patriarchal culture of the Judaic society. Within a patriarchal tradition, life is experienced through the reality of prescribed sex-stereotypes which again is reflected in the language used. Language, however, is not only the expression of a given culture but also a powerful tool for the perpetuation of that culture, because language is a vehicle of socialization. For this reason dictatorships and liberation movements alike devote much attention to language use. The importance of this is recognized, not only in the area of liturgy and worship, but also in the entire sphere of education, official church documents and theological language. (Several books and pamphlets are available with examples of inclusive language liturgies, hymns and prayers.)

4. The study of the anthropomorphic images of God and their influence on theological anthropology as well as on church structures, and the search for a richer imagery to express the reality of God.

5. The renewal of the concept of ministry including the question of the priesthood of all believers and a redefined relationship between laity and clergy.

6. The question of stewardship as it is affected by the failure of the church to meaningfully utilize the human resources of women.

As we see, the question of women in the church is not a marginal one. It relates to basic issues of the Christian church and it provides an opportunity for the church's renewal. It deserves much more attention from the churches than it now receives.

May the Lord give us eyes to see and wisdom to understand that without the total acceptance of the "other", our own humanity is incomplete. And may the love of God give us strength and courage to be a sign of the kingdom of God, both individually and as a church.





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### of the Women's Desk

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN

Addis Ababa 1973

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103 pages

#### LUTHERAN WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

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PROJECT : "WOMEN AS INNOVATIVE GROUPS"

The Women's Desk cooperates with the  
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on this project. The resulting  
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"Research", pages 53-55.

*Some of these publications are still  
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